SOME EARLY SOVEREIGNS OF TRAVANCORE

BY

Rai Bahadur P. SUNDARAM PILLAI

M.A., F.M.U., M.R.A.S., F.R. HIST. S.,

Trivandrum, Travancore

WITH A FOREWORD

BY

Rao Bahadur K. V. RANGASWAMI AIYANGAR

Edited and Published by

Author's Son

P. S. NATARAJAN

First Edition 1894
Second Edition 1943

Copies can be had from
THE SAIVA SIDDHANTA WORKS PUBLISHING SOCIETY, TINNEVELLY, LTD.,
Tirunelveli and Madras

Printed by S. Viswanathan at The Central Art Press,
No. 14, Singanna Naick Street, G. T., Madras

AN APPRECIATION

Sir C. P. RAMASWAMY AIYAR, LL.D., K.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., writes as follows:

Bhaktivilas,
Trivandrum,
4—5—1943.

Dear Mr. Natarajan,

I have just glanced through your very carefully documented reprint of your father's book on "Early Sovereigns of Travancore". It displays his characteristic clearness of exposition and his laborious research into the sources of early Travancore History.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar,
Dewan of Travancore.

Dedicated

TO

HIS HIGHNESS

SRI PATMANABHA DASA VANCHI BALA

SIR RAMA VARMA TIRUVADI

KULASEKHARA KIRITAPATI MANNEY SULTAN

MAHARAJA RAJA RAMARAJA BAHADUR

SHAMSHER JANG,

KNIGHT GRAND COMMANDER OF THE MOST EXALTED ORDER OF THE STAR OF INDIA,

FELLOW OF THE MADRAS UNIVERSITY,

MAHARAJA OF TRAVANCORE,

GRACIOUSLY RULING OVER VÊNÂD IN THE KOLLAM YEAR 1069

BY HIS HIGHNESS' DEVOTED SUBJECT AND SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

'Some Early Sovereigns of Travancore' was first published in 1894. Since the first edition was sold out long ago, the book was not available to the public for some years past. Time and on, there were demands for it from various quarters and I was not in a position to meet them. In these circumstances I have felt it to be my duty to issue a second edition.

In doing so, I have thought it would add to the utility of the book if the two papers, "Some Sovereigns of Travancore in the Sixth Century M.E." and "Miscellaneous Travancore Inscriptions" contributed by the Author to the *Indian Antiquary* in 1896 and 1897, were also included, together with some foot-notes to indicate the results of later researches in Epigraphy in Travancore so far as they affect the conclusions arrived at in this work. I have done this duty with great diffidence and hope it will be useful to the readers and will not mar the effect of the text.

I have to express my grateful thanks to Sri Rao Bahadur K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar, Avl., for his great kindness in having readily contributed at my request an erudite and comprehensive Foreword to this edition which, I am sure, adds greatly to its value.

My sincere thanks are also due to the Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Tinnevelly, Ltd., and the Central Art Press, Madras, for the neat and prompt execution of the printing and publication.

Harveypuram,
Trivandrum,
14*th Sept.* 1943

Author's son
P. S. NATARAJAN,
Editor & Publisher.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Publisher's Note ...	v
Foreword—by Rao Bahadur K. V. Rangaswami Aiyengar ...	vii
Preface—By Author ...	xxi
Some Early Sovereigns of Travancore ...	1
The Sovereigns of Travancore in the 4th and 5th Centuries M.E. ...	10
Some Sovereigns of Travancore in the Sixth Century M.E. ...	73
Miscellaneous Travancore Inscriptions ...	106
APPENDIX A	
Text of the Inscriptions ...	116
APPENDIX B	
Some Early Sovereigns of Travancore —A Review by Dr. Robert Harvey ...	130
APPENDIX C	
A Life Sketch of the Author by Dr. Robert Harvey ...	133

FOREWORD

In 1894, nearly fifty years ago, a slim volume of 82 pages was published. It bore the title "Some Early Sovereigns of Travancore" and the title page conveyed the further information that these rulers were brought to notice for the first time and their dates were determined by inscriptions. The author, P. Sundaram Pillai, had already established a reputation as a teacher, and at that time held the position of Professor of Philosophy in the Maharaja's College, Trivandrum. The position that he had won for himself in the academic world was reflected in the Fellowship of the Madras University, to which he had been nominated by the Chancellor in 1891. The distinction was much coveted. Professor Sundaram Pillai had attained it at the comparatively early age of thirty-six. He had had already a varied experience, having served first as the Headmaster and subsequently as the Principal of the Hindu College of Tinnevelly, as an employee in the Travancore Revenue Department, where he was virtually in charge of the Excise as Peravagai Sheristadar, and in intervals as an acting Professor of Philosophy in his old college, in which his teaching duties involved instruction not only in Philosophy but in History and English also. The University had utilised his services as an examiner in Philosophy, Tamil and History. His bias in studies, outside his own subject, was evident already in his founding with others the Saivaprakasa Sabha, Trivandrum, in 1885, and in his election to a membership of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

In spite of a succession of gifted Rulers and exceptionally able Ministers, under whom its administration rose in efficiency and ideals to a level not inferior to that of British India, Travancore did not then enjoy the wide public attention which it now receives. Its capital was inaccessible by railway. Few even among students of Indian history were interested in the past of the State, and very few even within its limits had any but the haziest knowledge of it. The history of the State was supposed to be given in Shungoony

Menon's readable but unreliable "History of Travancore" (1878), and its official acceptance as an authentic record was signified by the reproduction of a list (full of transparent blunders) in the Almanac which the State published every year. This list gave the names of 35 rulers, who were supposed to have reigned over the State from A.D. 1835 in uninterrupted succession. Shungoony Menon claimed to give authentic history only from this date. The period anterior to it was an admitted blank, though it was one of the most eventful in South Indian history for several centuries preceding the fourteenth.

It was this uncharted sea that Sundaram Pillai essayed to traverse. In the rare holidays that the exacting duties of a professor in the Maharaja's College then allowed, to interrupt the daily routine of four or five hours of teaching to as many classes of students, he had pursued his explorations in search of old lithic records, from which the forgotten past of the country might be reclaimed, and its story be again told. The search was conducted not only in his own spare time, but at his own expense, except when the startling results of his investigations reached the ears of those in authority and for a short period he received from the treasury a meagre dole in aid of his tours. Nothing short of a passionate desire to know the past of his country can have stimulated or sustained the continuous dedication of most holidays to this absorbing pursuit. The risks attending it, when one tried to peer at inscriptions in crumbling temples or stones half-buried in snake-infested jungle, as well as the patience and tact that were required to overcome the sudden scruples of easy-going pluralists among temple priests, who feared sacrilege from intrusions that might reveal the patience of long-suffering deities, to whom they failed to minister as required, have been told by Sundaram Pillai himself with inimitable humour. After he had thus garnered a sheaf of about fifty inscriptions, he found a forum in three meetings which the Public Lecture Committee arranged for an exposition of his researches. The

audiences were of a mixed nature, and the lectures had to be modelled to suit them. The wit and eloquence of the lectures, the ease with which he led his lay hearers over tracks, which only experts could tread, and his passionate plea for the study of the surviving authentic records of the past before they too disappeared, had their due effect. Those who heard the discourses wished to read them in print. The publication of the lectures was chiefly to meet this desire and incidentally also to stimulate interest in the scientific survey and study of the inscriptions, which still existed in thousands throughout South India.

An adventitious circumstance, more than its own qualities, drew contemporary attention to the book. Its author was one of the rare Indians who had been thought fit for appointment to a full professorship in an important college affiliated to the Madras University. Few who rail against the colour complex today have any idea of its widespread and resistless influence two generations ago. There was no dearth of Indian talent for utilisation in staffing Colleges. But it could only be used for subordinate positions. Sterile encomia for his work, devotion to duty and efficiency were the most that the best Indian teacher could look for. Tandalam Gopala Row, who made the reputation of the College at Kumbakonam, and for whose versatile learning and high character admiration was universal, could not be confirmed as the Principal of the College, which is still remembered because of his association with it. Towards the close of his life, he received the solatium of a professorship in history and economics in the Presidency College. Pundi Ranganatha Mudaliar, the most gifted and versatile professor of his day, had to act *sixteen* times as professor, before he could earn confirmation. Outside the limits of British India, an Indian might exercise boundless power as minister of an Indian state ; but within British India he could not become a Collector of a District. An Anglo-Indian might occasionally receive a *junior* professorship. But pigment determined election to a full professorship.

Professor Sundaram Pillai's case was therefore known to his contemporaries as a singular instance of merited recognition of an Indian's learning and ability as a teacher. Anything from so well recognized a scholar was sure of a deferential reception.

To those who read it then, as to those who will now read it in the reprint, which has been a task of piety to his son, Mr. P. S. Nataraja Pillai, its compelling qualities must be manifest. Versatile learning, among the leading teachers of the generations which struggled unsuccessfully for equal treatment with the raw alumni of British universities by whom professorships in Indian colleges were filled, did not mean in the case of such Indian scholars mastery of *one* subject and a shallow conversancy with several others. Whatever they studied they studied with intense devotion and with an absorbing passion for thorough mastery. This many-sided erudition proved a way of escape for color-blind administration. An inconvenient physicist, who happened to have cultivated Sanskrit, might for instance be shoved into a Sanskrit professorship, and physical science in the pre-Raman days be saved from the contamination of colour.

Even one who finds discourses on the subject-matter of inscriptions, which, though *human* documents, still read dull, may find entertainment as well as pleasure in reading Sundaram Pillai's lectures on the early kings of Travancore. One of the joys of reading lies in the discovery of concealed quotations and phrases from the great classics. This pleasure he who reads these lectures can have, when he finds phrases from Shakespeare, Milton and Bacon skilfully blended with the words of the lecturer so as to seem natural and spontaneous. The long and luminous paragraph (p. 58) celebrating the wisdom of the arrangements disclosed by the Maṇalikkarai inscription of M.E. 410, which Sundaram Pillai acclaims as "one of the great charters of Travancore," and the equitable adjustment of the burden of a land tax possessing the two qualities of fixity and certainty, to the benefit of Government and the subject, reads like an excerpt

from Adam Smith or J. S. Mill. The occasional flings at *sthalapuranas*, and priests, who would earn justly the reprobation in Milton's *Lycidas*, "the curse of the Maramaut cooly," and superstition are often in the manner of Gibbon, but more urbane. The experience of a revenue official is behind the exposure of the bane of revenue farming (p. 58). He is moved, as are readers of the famous Uttaramerûr Coḷa inscriptions, which describe the system of village autonomy that prevailed in the best days of Coḷa rule, when he has to describe proofs of autonomous village associations (p. 43), the right of villagers (as at Tâzhakkuḍi, p. 24) "to execute, and in a manner to ratify, the royal grant", or the meetings of the Mitrânandapuram *sabhâ*. With characteristic restraint and reluctance not to go beyond his authorities, he merely indicates the drift of the discovery of the existence of active and self-governing village associations against "the fashion nowadays to suppose that ancient Native Indian Government was a despotism, pure and simple," and would defer a categorical denial of the assumption till more materials are revealed (p. 18). The trained economist is in evidence in the lucid justification of the rule of the Koḍainallûr village council (p. 59) that, if, after the revenue demand for the entire village had been fixed, times of scarcity arise leading to a rise in grain prices, those who benefit by the rise in the village should make good the deficiency caused by the inability of the holders of lands whose crops have failed (p. 59). Even Freeman has not written anything more fervid or eloquent in pleas for the conservations of ancient lithic records than what Sundaram Pillai has said in one of the two articles to the *Indian Antiquary* (gathered together in the book now published) on the "pious duty which we owe our forefathers to collect and preserve what memorials they have so lovingly left behind." (p. 94).

The appeal that the published lectures made to a small circle of students of Indian archæology was more direct. They recognized in the lectures a mastery of the technique of the principles of historical criticism and of Indian palæography. An amateur had at a stride taken his place in the

front rank of Indian Archæology. Unlike the general type of epigraphist, whose concept of his duty begins and ends with the presentation of a correct text of his document, with an occasional literal English translation, Sundaram Pillai's many-sided knowledge and experience of men and affairs enabled him to deal with the documents in such a way as to get the last drop of information that could be pressed out of them and to present the information so gathered in an attractive form. When he places the student of lithic records on a par with Cuvier and Lyell in his ability to draw from a solitary reference or information a coherent and complete picture of a society that has vanished, even as an extinct Plesiosaurus may be reconstructed from a "single tooth or rib" (p. 46), he was not making for the historian, who used well and wisely the data furnished by his inscriptions, a claim that he himself had not with success exemplified in his lectures. The loving attention bestowed by Dr. Hultzsch and Rao Bahadur V. Venkayya on Sundaram Pillai's subsequent writings was a tribute to their recognition of his expert knowledge of their own trade.

Though, in an estimate of the permanent value of any scientific work, it is not obligatory to show its place in the development of the science, yet to assess a writer's work his position in the evolution of the science is necessary. So it is with Sundaram Pillai. He had been making inscription-hunting a holiday pursuit for some years before his success attracted the attention of the Government and a small grant-in-aid was sanctioned in 1891 for his investigations. This dole he acknowledges wlth grace and humour. His lectures were given in the first half of 1894 and published soon after. South Indian epigraphy was then in its infancy. An Epigraphist Assistant had been given to the Archæological Superintendent at Madras only five years before. Dr. E. Hultzsch (whose services to the science are considerable) was appointed to the post only in 1887. He was still feeling his way in an unexplored tract, when Sundaram Pillai's

book came out. A field worker had then no other guide than Burnell's *Elements of South Indian Palaeography*, a second edition of which came out in 1878. The script, *viz.*, Vaṭṭeḷuttu, in which many of the records of Travancore were incised, was confessedly treated with inadequacy in that valuable manual. It remained so even after the publication of Sundaram Pillai's lectures. Bühler, who published in 1896 the plates that accompanied the German edition of his *Indian Palaeography* (Eng. Trn. by Fleet, 1904), expressed a wish for more light on this script. Sundaram Pillai was thus a self-taught epigraphist. His superb mastery of Tamil as well as his familiarity with both Malayalam and the Malayalam-Tamil dialect even now spoken in Venâd enabled him to read inscriptions with ease. Besides Burnell's book, the only printed work of reference available to Sundaram Pillai, when he wrote his lectures and articles, was Robert Sewell's *Dynastic Lists of Southern India*, which was already somewhat out of date. To its influence must be ascribed the incorrect references to Câlukya-Coḷa conquest on pp. 13-15, and the error in the date assigned to the great Kuloṭṭunga Coḷa. That famous ruler was officially a Coḷa not a Câlukya. The error finds its sequel in the fanciful origin of Caluppars of Travancore from Câlukyas (p. 14). The dynastic name of an emperor is hardly likely to be borne by *all* his followers, and become a caste name.

Sundaram Pillai was thus a real pioneer in the field of not only the archæology of Travancore but of South India. The lectures dealt only with fourteen out of about fifty inscriptions that Sundaram Pillai had gathered by personal search. They were *his* discoveries. He makes no higher claim than that he had succeeded in *adding* the names of nine till then unknown kings to the dynastic list published in the Almanac of Travancore. The reigns of these nine rulers covered the fourth and fifth centuries of the Malabar Era. Their names, dates and some incidents of their reigns, were revealed by him. It is no mean achievement. But it is remarkable in another respect. Thirty years after the

publication of the lectures, the Travancore Archæological Department, for the creation of which his work and pleading furnished the impetus, published a list of the kings of these two centuries in the light of later research. It is remarkable, as pointed out by the Editor (p. 72), that with the exception of a name interpolated between the first and second name in Sundaram Pillai's list, the two lists are *identical.* A stronger proof of Sundaram Pillai's care and precision cannot be adduced. The same credit may be claimed for his dates, which he determined before Indian Chronography had been made exact by the labours of Sewell, Dîkṣit, Kielhorn and Swamikannu Pillai.

A vindication of a historian's method is furnished when later research confirms a reasoned surmise of his. In interpreting the name "Sarvâṅganâtha", Sundaram Pillai took it to be a title expressive of the king's command of *all* the traditional constituents of a Hindu kingdom (Sarvâṅga). He held that the title was borne by king Âdityavarma, and did not imply a different ruler named Sarvâṅganâtha (p. 79). An inscription discovered at Vaḍasseri some years after Sundaram Pillai's death proved the accuracy of his surmise, as it gives Âdityavarma (c. 550 M.E.) this title. It is a triumph, not of intuition but of method.

One of the charms of these lectures consists in the many digressions and side remarks. For these the informal character of a lecture, as distinguished from a historical essay, gave the scope. Suggestive phrases and illuminating remarks spring spontaneously in the discourses, like sparks which fly from a lapidary's wheel.

The critical mind of Sundaram Pillai resented the absurd legends which the *sthalapurâṇas* wove round easily explicable names, so as intentionally to obscure their origin. A good instance is the real name of modern Tiruvaṭṭâr, in which the first ā is shown long in all old documents and literature. When the vowel was incorrectly shortened by usage, so as to mean "a circling river", the wrong name was Sanskritized as *Cakratîrtha* and a self-contradictory

legend supporting the transformation was concocted and fathered on the *Padmapurâṇa* (p. 26). The considerations of the correct form of the old name Trivandrum (*Tiru-anantapuram*) which is written as *Tiru-ânandapuram* in all the inscriptions found in the Kṛṣṇasvâmi shrine in the temple of Sri Padmanâbha, leads to the conclusion that the latter form cannot be decisively accepted since the *Tiruvâymoli* and an inscription at Suchindram give the form now current, and the form which occurs in the Kṛṣṇasvâmi shrine records occurs nowhere else (p. 50). The Voltairean treatment of the three legends which seek to explain the name of the Vâriyar caste (in which Sundaram Pillai merely sees an indication of the hereditary occupation of temple sweeping) on pp. 84-86, in his later contribution to the *Indian Antiquary* (1896), and the devastating criticism of the stories that account for the origin of the Kollam era (pp. 95-105), which occurs in another article (the last he wrote) to the same journal (May, 1897) are in Sundaram Pillai's best vein. An absurd but widely cherished belief is less easily destroyed by a frontal attack than by the application of cold common sense and acidulated ridicule.

In a sympathetic and understanding review of the lectures, Sundaram Pillai's teacher and later chief, Dr. R Harvey thus summed up his qualities as a historical writer: "The author, for the purposes of history weighs evidence in the most severely critical manner, acknowledging ignorance where he really did not know, suspending judgment wherever he could not gather sufficient data to enable him to form it, and exercising his imagination only within strictly scientific limits and then with good effect" (p. 130). The verdict is just and stresses the qualities which make for permanence in historical reputation. The combination of a judicious use of imagination and restraint is seen in the many etymologies of place names and caste names that are attempted. The explanation for the cryptic Sanskrit name for Trivandrum is a good instance. It is convincing (p. 51). Another happy flash of inspiration has given the best available derivation for the indigenous name

of Calicut (p. 29). It is not so styled because its construction was interrupted by the crowing of a cock, according to the legend, but because it is the middle town of Malabar (*Koḷ-iḍai-kûru*). The idea is suggested in the course of an examination of the meaning of name Kuḷikod, which marks the site of an old Venâḍ capital Koḷiḍaikûru. After showing the cogency of his suggestion, Sundaram Pillai adds the warning: "the etymology of geographical names is not always a reliable guide to history." This is akin to his caution in another context: "In scientific researches nothing can be more dangerous than taking things on trust" (p. 90). The healthy scepticism leads him not only to reject the alleged connection of Saṅkarâcârya with the founding of the Kollam era but to express a proper doubt as to the great philosopher's being a native of Kerala itself (p. 100).

The lapse of half a century since the composition of these lectures might justify a review of its conclusion in the light of the researches that have been conducted since their publication. This period has been one of ceaseless activity in the discovery, decipherment and publication of a vast number of South Indian inscriptions. As a result, it may now be claimed that not only the main outlines of South Indian history but most of its details are placed beyond doubt. It is remarkable that such progress has left unaffected the chief results of Sundaram Pillai's researches into old Travancore history. His definition of the limits of Venâd, which he regarded as ending with Trivandrum, has indeed been questioned but on grounds which do not appear strong. His identification of Kûpaka with Attengal has been attacked with greater effect, chiefly from literary sources, but it is well to remember that writers of *Sandêsa-kâvyâs* cannot be credited with the precision of the composers of lithic records, who are in daily touch with the realities of administrative nomenclature. Revived "nationalism" in Travancore now resents any suggestion that any part of Travancore was conquered by a foreign

ruler, Pâṇḍya, Coḷa or Vijayanagara, while it is ready to advance somewhat fantastic claims for Travancore of conquest of distant foreign areas A temple in Oḷugaṇassêri is named Râjendra-coḷesvara. An inscription of M.E. 301 in this shrine records a small endowment for this temple for which Vîra-kêralavarma of Venâd and certain others of the area were responsible. The endowment is of certain lands in Mummuḍi-coḷa-nallûr (i.e., the "goodly town of the Triple-crowned Coḷa"), which is the old name of Koṭṭâr. The claim of the Coḷas to have conquered Venâd is endorsed by the Coḷa names of this shrine and the Koṭṭâr. Mummudi Coḷadêva is a title of the great Coḷa ruler Râjaraja, after whom apparently Koṭṭâr was renamed. It is as futile to deny the Coḷa conquest of Venâd as to omit to note that Venâḍ rulers frequently tried to release themselves from the position of tributaries to the Coḷa empire, which is assigned to them in *Vikramacoḷan-ulâ*. Sundaram Pillai saw in the endowment to the temple at Oḷuganaṣṣeri a "political peace offering" by the Venâḍ chief to the Coḷa emperor. This *may* have been so, but unless it can be shown that Kottar was then *outside* the jurisdiction of the ruler of Venâḍ, there can be no question of a political compliment in the endowment. The power of the Coḷa had in no way diminished under Vikrama-Coḷa (A.D. 1118-1135) who was reigning in M.E. 301, the date of this endowment. A Travancore archæologist questioned the correctness of the date given by Sundaram Pillai to Udayamârtâṇḍa-vârma (p. 29) but a later archæologist rebutted the criticism and affirmed its accuracy. In regard to the Gôsâla inscription of Âditya-varma, there have been differences of view, and these are summarized in a footnote supplied by the able Editor of this reprint (p. 31). While points on which later findings have necessitated a modification of Sundaram Pillai's views or dates have been so remarkably few, his cautious views on village self-government have been amply justified by new discoveries, which show that it was fairly universal throughout South India in those epochs.

III

Reference has to be made to the studies by which the lectures were supplemented by Sundaram Pillai. He published in 1896 and 1897 in the *Indian Antiquary* at the invitation of its editor, two papers bearing the titles " Some Sovereigns of Travancore in the Sixth Century M.E. " and " Miscellaneous Travancore Inscriptions ". It has been a wise idea of the Editor to incorporate these with the reprint of the earlier lectures, which they supplement. The suggestion that the Kollam era originated in a mere astronomer's agreement that adopted the convenient *Saptarsi* era, which is made in the second of the two papers (p. 103), is still worthy of consideration. It may be noted that Dr. Vincent Smith suggested that the inscriptions of the Kusân dynasty are dated in this era.

Early in the reign of Queen Victoria, there were in South India and Ceylon a number of very eminent Tamil scholars, whose services to literature are priceless. Their influence persisted in Sundaram Pillai's generation, and it was then a mark of accomplishment among scholars to show proficiency in the mother-tongue. A contemporary of Damodaram Pillai, Pundi Ranganatha Mudaliar and Kanagasabhai Pillai could do no less. Sundaram Pillai's main achievement in Tamil is his remarkable play, *Manonmaniyam* (1891) in which he wedded the ancient metres to modes and ideas borrowed from Shakespeare. Of all his writings this has proved the most popular, owing to its literary finish. A fourth edition of it appeared a year ago. While cast in the form of a historical play, it has no foundation in history. A short dissertation on the *Age of Tirujnâna-Sambandha*, which followed in 1895, close on the heels of his lectures, was an ambitious excursion into literary chronology. It is characterized by considerable dialectical skill, and its devastating criticism of Burnell and other hasty "authorities", whose contemporary reputation was greater than it deserved to be, is amusing to read now. Its findings cannot be yet considered as so firmly established as to be acceptable without qualification.

Controversial temper lowers it below the high level of the lectures by which Sundaram Pillai will continue to be best remembered. The high position he had won in the esteem of leaders of Indian Archæology is shown by its dedication to Dr. Hultzsch, and by the scholarly foreword which Rao Bahadur V. Venkayya wrote for a reprint of it in 1908. The comparative inferiority of the dissertation to the lectures may perhaps be due to the circumstance that the dissertation is only a revision of articles contributed to a college magazine in 1891, when his real work as an archæologist was beginning.

It has been the tragedy of the careers of many distinguished men that they should be cut off before the promise of their early years could be fulfilled. Pundi Ranganatha Mudaliar, whose versatility, Tamil scholarship, and ability as a teacher and writer, render him the nearest analogue to Sundaram Pillai, died in his forty-sixth year (1893). He was a slightly older contemporary. Honors came in a crowd to Sundaram Pillai after he swam, like a new planet, over the historical horizon. But, he was not spared to enjoy them or to complete any work that would have been adequate to his grasp of philosophy or his command of historical synthesis. The reprint now issued remains a melancholy reminder of what a longer life, had it been vouchsafed Sundaram Pillai, could have accomplished. If death had not interrupted his labours, it is hardly doubtful that permanent contributions to the history of not only Travancore but of South India, to the still inadequate literature available in English on S'aiva Siddhānta, and to the fixing of trignometrical points for a chronological survey of Tamil literature would have been made by his tireless brain and pen.

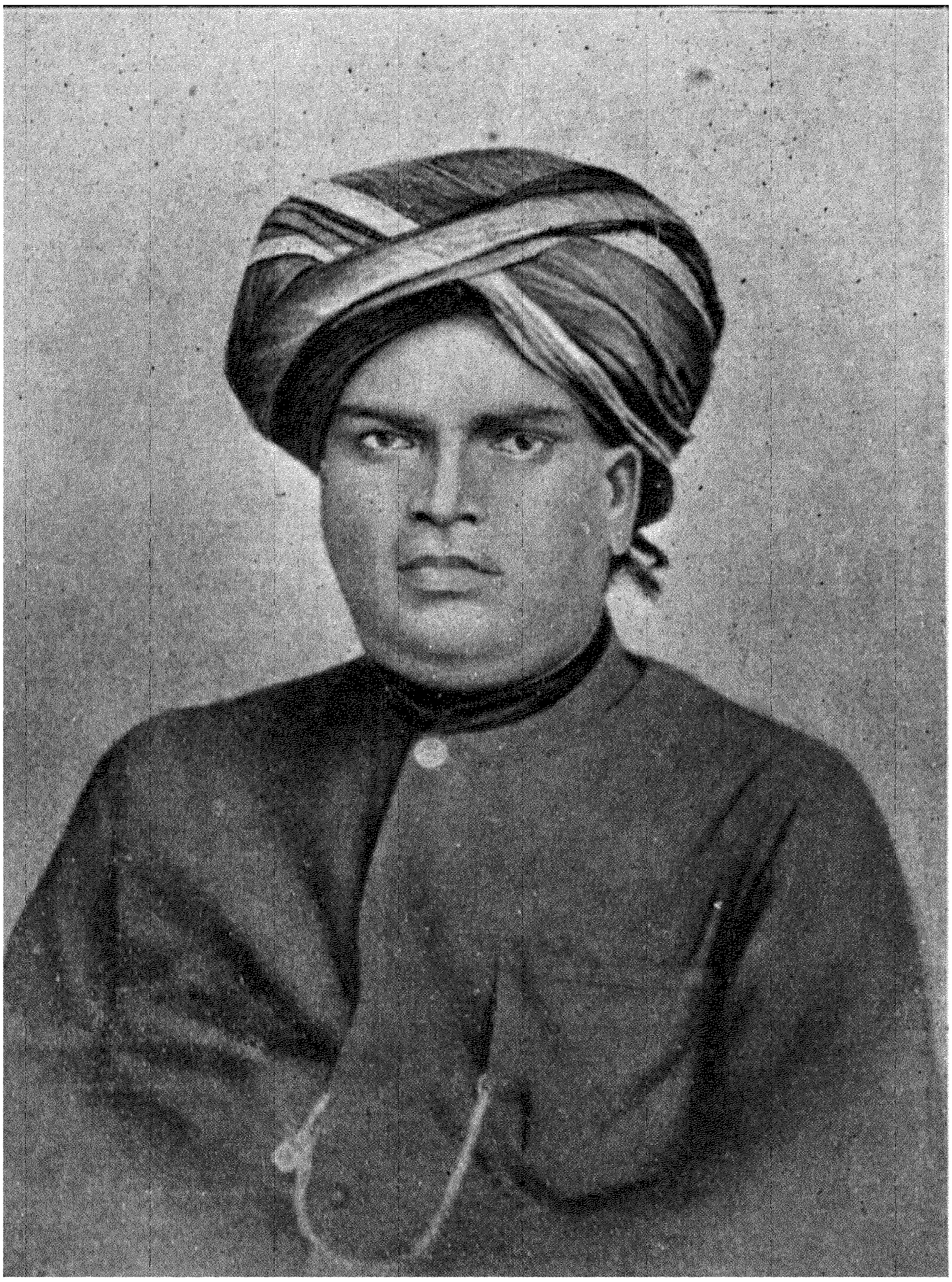
We have to rest satisfied with the fragments that are left Of these the lectures, now reprinted along with the two articles that supplement them, are the most precious. They merit the compliment that Sir William Hunter paid to a famous historical essay of the late Justice K. T. Telang,

viz., that all future students of Indian antiquities, who desired to write historical theses, should take it as their model. Mr. P. S. Nataraja Pillai has not only discharged a duty dictated by filial affection but one inspired by a longing to preserve a most valuable contribution to the history of his mother-state. The completion of the task by skilled and discriminating editing places once again in the hands of students of history in our country the historical exercises of a master mind, which in aim, content and form will not be easy to excel.

MYLAPORE,
7th September 1943

K. V. RANGASWAMI.

Prof. P. SUNDARAM PILLAI



Prof. P. SUNDARAM PILLAI

PREFACE

In submitting to the public the first fruits of my study of Travancore Inscriptions, my first and most agreeable duty is to acknowledge my grateful obligations to my gracious Sovereign. His Highness the Maharaja was pleased to sanction for a year in December 1891 a monthly grant of 50 Sirkar Rupees for the maintenance of an establishment I had started some time previously to find out and take facsimiles of old stone inscriptions in Travancore. I am indebted, therefore, to His Highness' Government to the extent of Rs. 582-14-9, which I have utilized in the undertaking, and for which accounts have been from time to time submitted But the above figures can scarcely give any adequate idea of the full support the cause received in consequence of the measure. So inveterate and widespread in Travancore is the common Indian mania for Government employment that the simple consciousness that a rupee comes, not from private funds, but from the Government treasury, is sufficient to lead to its bulging out twice or thrice in value in the distorted vision of those for whose services it might be paid. I do not think the amount I have had to invest in the concern from my own pocket, both before the date of the Government grant and since its discontinuance, though not much less when expressed in dry mathematical figures, have ever proved half as attractive in the eyes of my employees, or half as efficient in exacting steady work from them. Not only poor mortals, but the gods and goddesses themselves would appear to be guilty of the same partiality! For instance, the doors of temples that

cannot be opened except at stated hours, to private parties, for fear of offending the divine denizens thereof, fly open whenever convenient, without any visible dangers following the profane act, when the same parties call for the identical purpose, but on the receipt of a small pittance from the Government treasury; and stranger still, the deities inside are reported to change their temper and resume their original sullen mood, when once it is known that that pittance comes no more from the public exchequer! I owe, therefore as much to His Highness' Government for the indirect moral influence the timely grant secured for my self-imposed task, as for its actual and veritable value. But all this is nothing compared to the encouragement I have personally received at the hands of my Sovereign, whose frequent and appreciative inquiries uniformly lightened the burden of my dreary labours. I can never be sufficiently grateful to His Highness the Maharaja for the interest His Highness has always evinced in the work, and also for the proud privilege His Highness has accorded me of associating His Highness' name with this humble brochure.

I am equally thankful to H. B. Grigg, Esq., C.I.E., the British Resident, to whose kind and encouraging words I owe my first incentive to the work. My thanks are also due to the Travancore Government Lecture Committee for having permitted these lectures to be delivered under their auspices on three successive Saturday evenings, March 24th and 31st, and April 7th, 1894. I should also thank my friend Mr. K. G. Sesha Aiyar for the intelligent sympathy he has always evinced in my work and for his kindness in reading the proofs.

It behoves me to add a word of explanation why I have chosen to put my results in the form of popular lectures. It was not without much doubt and discussion within myself that I decided on adopting this course. Epigraphy is one of those auxiliary practical sciences, in which any one with the least culture might make himself useful, if but

sufficient interest be roused in him. In a country so devoid of history and so deficient even in *reliable data* for historical purposes, it cannot but be well to enlist the sympathy, if not also the services, of the general public in epigraphical work, at least in the way of discovering and bringing to notice the existence of inscriptions. So little do inscriptions now attract attention that men, often very intelligent and sometimes fairly educated as well, are perfectly unaware of their existence, even though their daily avocation leads them almost every hour to the spot, perhaps not infrequently to spend the best part of the day in wasting the very stone bearing the record, by squatting on it. Even to produce the bare consciousness that inscriptions are not the idle handiwork of antedeluvian *Bhûtams* or demons, worthy only of as much notice as the moss that grows upon them, seems desirable, since it may have at least the negative benefit of preventing wanton mischief being done with them. At any rate, I should be personally glad if at least one result would follow from a better knowledge of the value of these ancient documents, (*i.e.*) if I am not treated as a fantastic faddist when I next go in search of inscriptions, and am spared many an amusing philosophical reflection scarcely behind my back, on the incalculable diversities of human tastes But for the difficulty of reaching the scientific public, I would have, for considerations like these, even gone a step further and published these results in Tamil and Malayalam, a thought which I have not yet abandoned. I believe, therefore, the popular garb of these lectures will be readily overlooked, as well as such digressions and details in them as might be judged out of place in a paper prepared for a purely scientific Society or Journal. It is nevertheless hoped that nothing has been admitted which would detract from the accuracy essential to historical investigations. Being, however, provisional throughout, my conclusions are open to correction; and amendments and suggestions will be most thankfully received and acted on from whatever quarter they may come. To facilitate such

help, I add in the Appendix my readings of the documents here made use of, and propose to lodge the facsimiles themselves in the Trivandrum Public Museum.

My thanks are due to Messrs. Addison & Co., for the characteristic neatness and accuracy with which they have got up this pamphlet.

HARVEYPURAM,
TRIVANDRUM,
June 1894. } P. SUNDARAM PILLAI

TRANSLITERATION

Diacritical marks have been used as sparingly as possible. The following are the few adopted :—

அ = a, ஆ = â, இ = i, ஈ = î, உ = u, ஊ = û, எ = e, ஏ = ê, ஐ = ai, ஒ = o, ஓ = ô, ஔ = au ; ங் = ṅ, ச் = ch, ஞ் = ஞ், ட் = ṭ, ண் = ṇ, த் = t, ல் = l, ள் = ḷ, ழ் = ḻ, ற் = ṟ, ഡ = ḍ, ദ = d ; h is added to mark the aspirates.

Some Early Sovereigns of Travancore

For the First Time Brought to Notice with their Dates determined by Inscriptions

---

It was His Highness the late Maha Rajah of Travancore who observed in one of his public lectures that if India could be considered a microcosm of our Globe, Travancore could be with greater justification regarded as the epitome of all India. The observation was made with special reference to the variegated natural features of Travancore and to her equally rich and varied flora and fauna. It is, however, no less applicable to her population. It would be difficult, indeed, to find anywhere else in India, in so limited an area, a people so varied and typical of the mixed races of this continent. The two predominant factors of Indian civilization—the Aryan and the Pre-Aryan—will be found here in every degree of fusion. From the aboriginal *Kâṇikâr* or Hillmen to the *Vaidîka Nambûri* Brahmin, what stages of the meeting and mingling of the two races can we not perceive in the endless distinctions of caste so eminently characteristic of this coast? The subtle forces set in motion by the great Aryan race to subdue and absorb into its own polity the earlier races of India may be still seen at full work here in Travancore. Here again may be observed to take place under our very eyes the gradual evolution of all the forms of marriage known to History,—endogamous, exogamous, polyandrous, polygamous, *punaluan*, and what not[1]. Arrested in consequence at different stages of their natural growth, may

---

1 *Vide* L. H. Morgan's *Ancient Society*. *Punaluan* is the *Pâṇḍava* type.

be seen also all conceivable laws of inheritance. Equally diversified and full of philological import is the language of the country. Exactly as the practised ear perceives all possible stages of corruption between pure Tamil and pure Malayalam, as one passes from one end of the land to the other, say from Cape Comorin to Paravûr, so may also the critical student notice all varieties of mongrel mixtures of Sanscrit and Tamil, as he descends from the proud poems of the erudite few to the popular ditties of the illiterate many, from a *Bhâsha Sâkuntalam*, for instance, to a *Tôrrampâttu*[1]. Every face, too, in the evolution of that all-embracing conglomeration of faiths, ceremonies, and philosophies, called Hindu religion, from the grossest fetichism, worship of trees, of snakes, of evil spirits and what not, to the highest Vedantic school of *Sankarâchârya*,—himself supposed to be a native of the place—finds here its votary to this day, —not to speak of the large representatives of foreign religions, such as the Syrian Christians, who claim to have received their gospel direct from Saint Thomas himself. With regard to manners, customs, dress, and ornaments, infinite is the variety that obtains. Each caste would appear to have been bent upon originating and appropriating to itself a particular form of these natural adjuncts of social organization. Even more tempting than all this pleasing variety is, to the student of Indian Ethnology, the general air of primitive simplicity that nevertheless pervades the entire society, its language and institutions, its manners and traditions. And the air of primitiveness is by no means deceptive Most of these social peculiarities are in truth but strange survivals of what at different stages was the rule in all India, at any rate in the

1 Means "A song on the Apparition," and narrates the story of *Silappadhikâram*, the ancient Tamil epic. It is being fast supplanted in popular favour by more modern songs and seems to have but a short term of life now before it.

(The prophecy has become true and Tôṟṟampâttu is a thing of the past.—Ed.)

Peninsular portion of it. Endless particulars from the daily routine of individual and social life may be given to illustrate how strangely things survive in this land, though long extinct elsewhere. But suffice it here to say that Travancore seems to have played, in Indian Anthropology, the part of a happy and undisturbed fossiliferous stratum. And it is easy to understand why it should have been so. No internal revolution seems to have ever convulsed her social system so as to efface the past, to which her own remarkably conservative nature inclined her steadfastly to stick; and as for the violent changes outside her domains, they seem to have never reached her till their fury was spent, so that when, floating down in the fulness of time, their influence came to be felt, the nett or skeleton results alone sank into the structure of her society to be preserved unmolested for ages to follow. Thus taking all in all, Travancore, I earnestly believe, deserves more attention from the students of Indian History than at first sight her apparent geographical and historical isolation would seem to entitle her to; her population being so remarkably varied and typical, and their social fabric a veritable mine of precious antiquities in many a department of Anthropology

But to the best of my knowledge the mine remains unworked—nay even unnoticed—up to date. I do not complain that the history of the people is yet to be written; but I confess I am surprised to find that the political history of this Principality, one of the most ancient though it is in all India, is itself a blank all beyond the immediate present. Even of our ruling royal dynasty, whose origin, Mr. Shangoonny Menon observes[1], tradition reckons as coeval with creation itself, what information are we in a position to offer to the critical historian beyond a couple of centuries ago, while several even of the minor Barons of Great Britain are able to trace their blue blood over twice that

1 *Vide* the opening sentence of Mr. Shangoonny Menon's *History of Travancore*.

period? The Travancore Government Almanac[1] publishes, no doubt, year after year, a list of 35 sovereigns from 1335 A.D., as having immediately preceded His Gracious Highness our present Maha Rajah. But apart from such indefinite and suspicious-looking names as '*Wanaut Moota Rajah*'[2] which cannot but detract from the scientific value of the document, what little I know from independent and indubitable sources of knowledge is not in favour of its accuracy. Mr. Shangoonny Menon begins, indeed, his history with *Brahma* the Creator, but he fills up his first chapter which brings down the account to His Highness Martanda Varma, who began his rule just 164 years ago, *i.e.*, within the memory in all probability of the historian's own grandfather, with such questionable materials as to render it difficult to rebut Mr. Sewell's condemnation of the whole as devoid of historical value[3]. When of the political history of the country, of the history of the unquestionably ancient Royal dynasty itself, we know so little, it is no wonder that we should know less in the more obscure and less attractive branches of Travancore Archæology.

But how long are we to remain in this lamentable, if not disgraceful, condition of ignorance? To a native of Travancore—and I am one—it cannot but be galling to have to wait till competent foreign scholars find leisure to investigate and enlighten him on the history of his own fatherland. He would rather, whether fully qualified for it or not, gird up his loins and be doing something, than be simply moaning over the fact till the fortunate advent of a competent *savant*. But even should one be willing

---

1 *Vide* page 43, Part II, of the Almanac for 1894.

(The Almanacs published up to 1904 had this list, since then it is discontinued—Ed.)

2 Means but 'the ruling sovereign of Travancore,' 'Wanaut' being Vênâḍ or Travancore, and Moota Rajah or *Mûtta Tampirân* being the popular way of styling the eldest member of the royal family.

3 *Vide* Sewell's *Lists of Antiquities*, Vol. II, part treating of Travancore.

to wait, the sources of sure information, the facts and things to be observed, do not seem to be endowed with equal placid patience. With the rapid spread of education and the general uprising and commingling of the masses, the very things of archæological import are fast vanishing out of sight. No one with wakeful eyes could live a decade now in Travancore without being constantly reminded of the extraordinary rapidity with which the tide of progress is washing away all old landmarks even in this retired creek of the so-called "changeless East." Traditional beliefs, ways, and manners are dissolving like spectres in the air. Every caste seems bent now upon giving up its own, for the sake of the forms and ceremonies, dress and ornaments, and even the modes of speech, of some other which it supposes to be superior to itself. What traits of the primitive Dravidian *Vênâd* chiefs would you discover in the anglicized *Nair*, or of the Vedic age of simplicity in the *Nambûri* constable[1]? However desirable such changes might be from other points of view, to the antiquarian they cannot be more gratifying than the rapid, dizzying, gyrations of an animalcule can be to the microscopist. To neglect vaccination and to trust to *Ûrâttu*[2] is certainly not desirable; to indulge in *Padaiyani*[3] or mock fights, in these days of peace, might be even more culpable; but when the *Ûrâttu* and *Padaiyani* are gone for good, the historian will look in vain for equally good and clear evidences of the past history of the particular localities. The damp atmosphere of Travancore is another source of dread. It

1 The last *Travancore Government Gazette* to hand announces the reduction of a Namburi Sub-Inspector of Police. Let us hope it is only for his simplicity!

2 *Ûrâttu* is a village feast generally in honour of the heroine of *Silappadhikâram*, celebrated as a disinfectant of small-pox, exactly as it was resorted to in the days of that old Tamil epic,— *vide* page 31, Swaminatha Iyer's edition.

3 Means literally 'battle array.' It is a disorderly march past under torchlight, often ending in something worse than sham fights. It is an important item of calculation with *abkari* renters

is fast demolishing and disintegrating sources of information of the highest scientific value possible. A host of historical temples with valuable inscriptions are fast going to ruins. Left to the dissolving influences of nature or worse still, to the tender mercies of *Marâmut coolies*,[1] the temples of the land, with their many and diverse architectural peculiarities and memorable historical associations and inscriptions, will before long either quietly cease to be, or so utterly change their aspect as to present no meaning to the future inquirer. Our sources of historical information then, both ethnical and epigraphical, seem to be all equally moribund, muttering, as it were with their dying gasp, "Observe now or never!" How important, how helpful, these dying declarations of the past are often found to be, only those who have dealt with them can know, and, if I here venture to catch and interpret some of the still voices of antiquity in our midst, with a view mainly to awaken general interest in our history, I have no other justification to offer, no other apology to make, than that they might ere long cease to be heard at all.

I propose to begin our study with the Royal House of Travancore, and I have not the least doubt you will all agree with me in thinking that there can be for us no worthier object of inquiry. I propose again to confine our attention at present to what light we could secure from public stone inscriptions.

Of all the materials available to the critical student of Indian History, inscriptions, as far as they go, are, I believe, the very best. It may be possible, indeed, to extract a few scattered grains of historic truth from the old and genuine *Purâṇas*, but only those that have made the trial can be aware of the difficulties and doubts with which the process is beset. Even when the genuineness of a

---

1 Day labourers in the *Sirkar* Public Works department. *Marâmut* is an Arabic word used in Travancore to mark off the native agency as contrasted with one under the European Engineers.

Purâṇa is settled beyond doubt, and its age determined, one ought to have an extraordinary fund of faith, or as it is called, 'piety,' to lack a sense of insecurity, as one threads his way through the endless accounts of *Dêvas* and *Asuras*, and discerns here and there a glimmering, and perhaps distorted, view of matters earthly and human. But whatever might be the historical value of the real and old *Ashtâdasa Purâṇas*, to follow the *Stala Mahâtmyas* as faithful guides would imply an unconditional surrender of all canons of historic criticism. They all profess to be integral portions of the old 18 *Purâṇas*, but it is an open secret that their manipulation can scarcely be said to have yet ended. To quote a familiar instance, the late Mr. Minâkshi Sundaram Pillai of Trichinopoly, the last of the Tamil bards, used to supply *Stala Purâṇas* on order; and I know a respectable and scholarly physician in Kottayam is to this day engaged in writing a *Mahâtmyam* in Sanscrit on his own household deity. But whether old or new, it would be a satisfaction to find in these works of skill even remote references to events historical. But true to their function, these religious compositions begin and end with *gods*, and condescend to chronicle only *their* miraculous dealings with friends and foes. Local traditions in some countries may subserve historical purposes, though the logical rule for the rapid deterioration of their testimony has always to be kept in view. But in Southern India, all legendary lore is of the most mischievously misleading character. We cannot travel far, even in Travancore, without constantly coming across hills, valleys, streams, temples, and hamlets, which are fondly believed to be connected with the incidents of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. As observed by Dr. Burnell, most of them are "merely attempts at explanation of the unknown through current ideas, which, in Southern India, amount to the merest elements of Hindu mythology, as gathered from third-rate sources."[1] In

1 *Vide* Dr. Burnell's *Palæography, Introduction*, page 1.

Travancore, even the legitimate names of places, of idols, of castes, of religious dignitaries, and of social ceremonies, which when carefully understood bear clear historical allusions, are strangely twisted and corrupted to suit fanciful derivations under the influence of the same myth-making tendencies. Literature is another of the resources usually open to the student of history, and in India too, much valuable and reliable information may be gleaned from the ancient literary writings, so long as they had the good sense to be true to nature and man, and to dispense with the crutches of "Divine machinery" so uniformly found at every turn in their later limping career. But unhappily for us in Southern India, we know how soon the Tamil Literature, the only one among the Dravidians that can boast of any antiquity, degenerated and lost its healthy Realism. Copperplate documents, temple and palace records, and what are called *Grantavari* or connected accounts in respectable households of long standing, are less pretentious but often more fruitful sources of information; but even these are certainly inferior in point of reliability to contemporary stone inscriptions in open and public places. Copperplate grants, being mostly private property of individuals or corporations, have always the chance of turning out forgeries in favour of vested interests. As for the other records, it is always impossible to rebut the charge of corruption or interpolation, since they have frequently to be transcribed—mostly by unqualified hands—in consequence of the ephemeral writing materials to which they are generally committed. Unless, therefore, we have clear internal evidence or other collateral securities, it is seldom safe to lean on crumbling cadjans, however venerable. On the other hand, a contemporary inscription in a place of public resort, if once deciphered, and its age determined, will afford for ever a footing to the historian as sure and firm as the rock on which it is engraved. It would seem then to be the very first duty of those who crave for more light on the past of Travancore to ascertain whether such incontrovertible

epigraphical evidence is available in this ancient principality before proceeding to utilize less trustworthy sources of information. Fortunately for us, inscriptions are not altogether rare in Travancore. I have with me about one hundred and odd of these ancient stone documents, taken from different quarters, mostly from places south of Trivandram, and by confining my attention, for the present, to the light they shed on the history of the Royal House we are now in quest of, I will have also the opportunity of illustrating their general historical value.

One word more I feel bound to add in the way of preface. Since most of the documents I have now the pleasure to place before you are in that mysterious archaic alphabet, called *Pâṇḍi-chêra* or *Vaṭṭeḻuttu*, the translation I give of them ought to be considered tentative only. The characters of this curious alphabet, which according to some authorities is the only one original to India, are not yet fully made out. Out of 180 letters which ought to make it up, Dr. Burnell's conjectural plate (No. XVII. in his *Palæography*) is able to supply only 96 Until, therefore, photo-lithographed copies of the facsimiles with me are placed before the scientific public, and my readings and renderings subjected to searching criticism, I have no right to claim your confidence. I may, however, in the meantime, assure you that each of the inscriptions I have here to depend upon has received my best and most anxious attention, and that sufficient time has been allowed to elapse since the collection was completed for patient study and reflexion. I shall further indicate, as we go on, whatever doubts or difficulties still strike me as material to my interpretation. The whole being thus but provisional, I have not made the translations altogether and strictly literal, which would be but rendering them nearly unintelligible in the absence of the originals for reference. They are nevertheless as faithful as I can make them under the circumstances.

THE SOVEREIGNS OF TRAVANCORE IN THE 4th AND 5th CENTURIES M.E.

Proceeding then to my work, I shall select a period for our study, which is an absolute blank in the history of Travancore, as it now stands. The list of 35 sovereigns given in the Travancore Government Almanac begins, as I have already told you, with 1335 A.D , so that from the 14th century downwards, we have some sort of account to give of the Travancore Royal dynasty, whether absolutely correct or not. In Mr. Shangoonny Menon's History, too, we have some sort of account, however interrupted or loose, only from that date downwards. "In the Kollom year 5 (830 A.D)," writes this author, " Udaya Marthanda Vurmah Kulasekhara Perumal died, but his successor's name and the particulars of his reign are not traceable from the records. The names and other particulars of many of the succeeding kings are also not in the records."[1] The writer then returns to his narrative only with 505 M.E., or 1330 A.D., when, according to the author, the account of the pagoda at *Vycome*[2] show that King *Âditya Varma* " assumed authority over the affairs of that Davaswam "[3] or temple. Thus, then, it is clear we have now no information whatever to give for the first five centuries of the Malabar Era[4]. Leaving the earlier periods for further researches, we shall here select for our study the last two centuries of this blank epoch, viz., the fourth and fifth centuries M.E., and shall try to see whether our inscriptions can help us to fill up the gap with authentic facts and dates.

---

1 *Vide* page 89, Shangoonny Menon's *History of Travancore.*

2 *Vycome*, or rather *Vaikam*, is a populous village about 24 miles to the south of Cochin. According to Dr. Gundert, the word means ' alluvial deposit,' pointing to the probable geological origin of the place. The local deity is called ' Kôlappan,' obviously a corruption of 'Kôilappan,' showing that 'Kôil' must have been once used to designate the spot, exactly as Chidambaram was in the days of the early *Saiva* saints.

3 *Vide* page 93, Shangoonny Menon's *History of Travancore.*

4 The Report on the Travancore Census of 1891 says, "The 1st Perumal was installed about 344 A.D. For about 12 centuries after this there is no authentic record of any value." – *Vide* page 179, Vol. I.

In the very opening year of this period, *viz.*, 301 M.E., or 1125 A D., we find *Sri Vîra Kêraḷa Varma* ruling over Travancore. Here is the document—a public stone inscription—in proof thereof. It comes from a deserted village, called *Chôḷapuram*, about a mile to the east of *Oḷugaṇachêri*, the transit station between Tinnevelly and Trivandram. In this deserted village, stands the neglected temple of *Râjêndra Chôlîswaram*, to complete the ruins of which not many recurring monsoons are now needed. Of the historical importance of the temple, this is not the place to speak. I shall reserve that sad tale for a more suitable occasion. Meantime, if any one wishes to verify the document I have now to present, let him look up the western wall of this shrine, where he will find it engraved in old Tamil characters in four long lines. Care, however, should be taken that the examination is not long postponed, lest the temple be gone by the time the expedition is undertaken, and equal care should be taken also, in the course of the examination, not to disturb the serpents inside, lest the examiner be gone before his mission is fulfilled! The document I depend upon runs thus.—

No. 1[1] / 9 — OLD TAMIL[2] / SEN TAMIL CURRENT.

Hail! Prosperity! In the year opposite[3] the year 301, since

---

1 The numeral above indicates the serial number of the inscriptions as made use of in these lectures, while the one below gives the number as in my register.

(This inscription is republished in Travancore Archæological Series, Vol. IV, p. 17.—Ed.)

2 The description above the line refers to the characters, and the one below to the language of each inscription. For a specimen of *Old Tamil* characters, see Dr. Hultzsch's facsimile of Rajaraja's inscription, No. 1, in *Vol. II, Part I, of South Indian Inscriptions*. The same inscription will be a specimen also of what I call *Sen Tamil Current* with reference to the language of the document.

3 Endless are the controversies with regard to the interpretation of this expression as found in the *Tirunelli* copperplate grant. For the opinions of Mr. Whish, Sir Walter Elliot, Dr. Burnell, Dr. Caldwell, and Dr. Hultzsch, see pages 288 and 289 of the *Indian Antiquary for August* 1891. Here, however, the word *opposite* evidently means '*equivalent to*.'

(The Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, says, "Year opposite to 301 is 302 and not 301."—Ed.)

the appearance of Kollam, with the Sun in the sign of Leo (*i.e.*, in the Malabar month Chingam), we, the loyal chieftains[1] of Sri Vîra Kêraḷa Varma, flourishing in Vêṇâḍu, (viz.) Danañjaiyan Kaṇḍan of Varukkappaḷḷi, Sri Tongappalla (?) Sri Saiyan *alias* Sri Sakkarâyudhan of Maṇṇûr, Kaṇṇan Gôvindan, the brief writer,[2] (private secretary ?) and Kêraḷa Simha Pallavaraiyan *alias* Vikraman Kunṛan of Uḷḷiruppu[3] hill, in the discharge of our official agency, do make over the tax in paddy and money, due from Vaḍasêri, to this side of Mummuḍi Chôḷa Nallûr, as a gift to the god, to be utilized for supplying every day four *nâḷies* of rice, vegetables, ghee, Curds, arecanuts and betel, and also one *nanda* (or perpetual) lamp, to the Mahâ Dêva of the temple of Râjêndra Chôḷîswaram, in Mummuḍi Chôḷa Nallûr *alias* Kôṭṭâr, and in order that the arrangement might last as long as the sun and the moon endure, we make the gift, solemnly pouring water on the altar, and cause also the grant to be engraved on stone.

And there to this day stands the document engraved on stone, whatever has become of the pious dedication it was meant to perpetuate. It perpetuates to us, at any rate, the happy memory of His Highness Sri Vîra Kêraḷa Varma, who was reigning in Travancore, in the first month of the first year of the fourth century of the Malabar Era,

---

1 The expression is *அமைஞ்ச அதிகாரர* – They were feudal chiefs and not 'paid agents,' as far as I can ascertain.

(But in Tr. A. S. Vol. IV., this word is translated as 'the officers.'—Ed.)

2 The original reads "*எழுததுசிறுவரிபண*."

(In Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, p. 17-18 – the term is read as சிவரிபுள்ளி and *Varipuḷḷi* is taken to mean an accountant. – Ed.)

3 (Tr. A. S, Vol. IV, p. 17, says "*Uḷḷiruppu* is evidently the name of another office connected with the tax department" and the name is given as "the *Uḷḷiruppu* Vikkiraman Kunṛan alias Keralasingapallavaraiyan of Kunṛinmel.—Ed.)

or roughly speaking about the latter half of August 1125[1]? The document proves also that Travancore, or *Vênâḍ*[2] as it was then called, was under him a well-organized principality with loyal feudal chieftains to transact public business in her name, and levying taxes, as she does to this day, both in kind and in cash. The Government dues even in these backward days, with heavy military charges, could not have been anything but moderate and fair, as the whole revenue of the tract of country, set apart for the purposes of the grant here recorded, was considered adequate to furnish daily but 4 *nâḷies* of rice and sundries to the Mahâ Dêva of the Rajendra Choliswaram temple. This temple, as the name indicates, was founded in honour of the famous Eastern Chalukya-Chola Emperor, Râjêndra Chola, who, according to the latest researches, ruled from 1063—1112 A.D. over almost the whole of the Madras Presidency, from *Kalingam* in Orissa to *Viliñam* in our own coast[3]. The circumstances under which Sri Vira Kerala of Venad was prompted to dedicate so piously a portion of his revenue to a temple founded by a foreign monarch are, of course, now difficult to determine; but if I am at liberty to venture a hypothesis, I suspect the grant was meant, in all probability, as a political peace-offering to the representatives

---

1 The equation for the conversion of the Malabar or Kollam Era to the Christian is + 824¼. I use the Malabar year throughout, as it is the one still current in the country.

(Dr. Robert Schram, Vienna, who verified the dates at the request of the author, wrote in In. Ant., Vol. XXV, p. 10, 'No. 1 has no particulars by which to decide whether the year is current or expired. It may correspond either to Aug. 1126 or 1127—Aug. 1125, if one begins with Chingan instead of Kanya.'—Ed.)

2 *Vêṇâḍu* is one of the twelve districts of low or vulgar Tamil according to Tamil Grammarians. *Kêrala Utpatti* makes it one of the divisions of Kerala. It is derived from *Vêl* = love or desire, either directly or through *Vêṇ*. *Venad* would mean, therefore, the land of love or the lovely land.

3 *Vide* page 276, *Vol. XX, of the Indian Antiquary.*

of the Chola Power in the land.[1] It being but twenty-three years after the death of Rajendra, Venad must have been, about this time, just recovering from the terrible shock it had received from the victorious arms of that great conqueror, whose forces, after subduing the 5 Pandyas,[2] overran all *Nânjinâd*, and advanced as far to the west, as the ancient seaport of Viliñam,[3] about 10 miles to the south of Trivandram. Rajendra's was no passing whim of conquest. His vigilance extended over every part of his territories, and he did all he could to consolidate them into one enduring empire. He transformed *Kôttâr*, the chief city of South Travancore, into *Mummuḍi Chôlanallur*—[4] "the good town of the thrice-crowned Chola," and left there, not merely the temple of Mahâ Dêva noticed in the document before us, but, what is more, a powerful "standing army"[5] to watch over his interests in this distant corner of his dominions. The *Oḍḍars*[6] and *Chaluppars*,[7] so common all over the southern districts and in Trivandram, mark to this day the extent of the old *Châlukyan* sway in the land. I am afraid, therefore, Sri Vira Kerala was making but a virtue of necessity, when

---

1 I say *Chola* Power, as it looks probable that Rajendra's dominions in the South fell to the lot of the Cholas rather than to the Eastern Chalukyas.

2 "விட்டகணையினில் மீனவரைவரும் கெட்ட கேடுகண்டு கேட்டிலை போலுமே." *Kalingattu Parani.*

3 வேலை கொண்டு விழிஞமழித்ததும் சாலை கொண்டதும் தண்டு கொண்டலவோ. *Kalingattu Parani.*

4 Rajendra is called "Mummudi Chola" in an inscription dated the 14th year of his reign—*vide* Dr. Hultzsch's report for 1892. But as some of his predecessors were also known by this name, we cannot be sure of the fact.

5 Called நிலைப்படை in an inscription with me dated in the 39th year of his reign.

6 *Oḍḍar* means the men of Odya or Orissa. Rajendra was himself first anointed king at *Vengi* in 1063.

7 The word is evidently a corruption of Chalukkar or Chalukyas.

he thus yielded up the tax on the tract of land between Kôṭṭâr and Vaḍasêri for the support of the "great god" of Rajendra. It nevertheless proves, for one thing, that the Venad principality was gradually emerging, with the opening years of the fourth century M.E., from the effects of the Chalukyan-Chola eclipse. The receipt of a grant is an acknowledgment of the right of the grantor to make the grant. It argues, therefore, both practical shrewdness and statesmanlike sagacity, on the part of Vira Kerala, that he should have thus fully recognized the situation and made the best of it.

That this policy of conciliation with an enemy, too powerful at once to overcome, was only a preliminary for the recovery of lost territories, as opportunities occurred, is proved by the document I have next to present, dated just eighteen years afterwards. This inscription comes from *Tiruvallam*,[1] a petty village near the old mouth[2] of the *Karamanai* river, about 4 miles to the south of the Trivandram fort. Within a rectangular enclosure, on the eastern bank of the river, stand three chief shrines, of which the easternmost, dedicated to Mahâ Dêva, is certainly the oldest. The middle one—the smallest of the three—is now said to be sacred to Brahma, and it is on its western wall that the following grant is inscribed, in rather small and superficial *Vatteḷuttu* characters, running over ten closely packed lines Being close to a holy bathing *ghat* still in use, and being in some measure related to the central temple in the capital, all the three shrines are in pretty good condition, though, because of the exposed situation, the

1 *Vallam* means, according to Dr. Gundert, a place for watering fields. Would not Vallam mean the same in ഇല്ലവും ചെല്ലവും വല്ലവും വഴിക്കം in Siva Purana?

2 This river seems to have frequently altered its place of discharge even in recent times. The shifting boundary of the two adjoining *taluqs* is a guide as to what the course was, when the administrative divisions were last arranged.

inscription itself is fully open to the effacing influences of the sun and rain. The translation of this rather lengthy record would run thus :—

No. $\frac{2^{1}}{47}$ — VATTELUTTU / OLD MALAYALAM[2]

Hail! Prosperity! In the Kollam year 319,[3] with Jupiter in the sign of Scorpio, and the sun in Capricornus (*i.e.*, the Malabar month of Makaram), was done the following deed[4]. Tenganâḍu, belonging to the loyal chieftains of Sri Vîra Kêraḷa Varma Tiruvaḍi, graciously ruling over Venad, being recovered,[5] the said chieftains make over in writing the tax payable in paddy within the area of Nigamattûr, amounting to**, and the duties called *Chêvatu* and *Aḷagerutu,* as well as the tax on hand looms, in order to provide daily, in all, 7 *nâḷies* of rice, for the use of Brahmin worshippers, (*Namaskâram*) and for evening offerings to the Mahâ Dêva, Tirukkaṇṇappan,[6] and Gaṇapati in the

---

1 This inscription is published in the Travancore Archæological Series, Vol. III, p. 40 without acknowledgment or reference.

2 Old Malayalam differs but little from current Tamil. I should have reckoned it as *Sen Tamil*, but for certain inflexions—for instance வருவிது instead of வருவது ; நமஸ்காரத்தினு instead of நமஸ்காரத்திற்கு'

3 The date is read as 399 (= A. D. 1224) in Tr. A. S. The inscription is published as No. 11 in Tr. A. S., Vol. III, p. 41.

[" There is an inscription of his reign (Ravikerala Varma) dated in Kollam 393 at Tirukkandiyur (Tr A.S. Vol.I, p. 289) and another at Manalikkarai near Padmanabhapuram dated in Kollam 410 Since we find that this King commenced his rule already in 393 we have to take the Tiruvallam epigraph of Kollam 399 wherein the King called Vira Kerala Varma to be Vira Ravi Kerala Varma. The date of this inscription has been given out as Kollam 319 in Indian Antiquary (Early Sovereigns of Travancore)". Report of the Tr. Ar. Department for 1095—Ed.]

4 "செயதகாரியமாவிது" is an expletive to introduce a document,

5 The word is சியித்ததில.

6 There is nothing to show that the Tamil saint of this name had ever a temple at this spot. The word refers only to Krishna, now the presiding deity.

temple of Tiruvallam, and also to provide once a month one candelabrum, (*dîpamâla*) for each of the (first) two deities. Accordingly from this time forwards, Mahâ Dêva shall have two *nâḷies* of rice, Tirukkaṇṇappan two *nâḷies*, Gaṇapati one *nâḷi*, and the worshipping Brahmins two *nâḷies*. Moreover, the eight coins[1] given in addition by the men of Kâṭṭuśêri, being also handed over as *Nêli*, to Nârâṇa Tâdar, he shall make a set-off with that money for the amount he has invested in the purchase of Aruviyûr-compound, and he shall further, after making forthwith a flower garden therein, supply the three deities with two garlands each, and take for himself (in return for his labour) the boiled rice offered to the gods. Nârâṇa Tâdar, on his part, while accepting the aforesaid grant of the tax due from Nigamattur, amounting in paddy to [illegible] and the duty called *Aḷagerutu*, as well as the tax on hand looms and the 8 coins given as *Nêli*, agrees to collect the said dues in half-yearly payments, to grant receipts therefor, to meet the charges thereon, and to furnish the *Dîpamâla*, as well as the garlands from the flower garden (now directed to be opened). If Nârâṇa Tâdar [should ever fail][2], the village association, the Biḍâra Tiruvaḍi,[3] and the temple managers are empowered to carry out this arrangement, as long as the moon and the stars endure, through such agencies as they might be pleased to nominate.

Here then in this document, we have irrebuttable evidence of the continuance of Sri Vira Kerala Varma's rule up to Makaram 319 M.E., or roughly speaking up to the end

---

1 அச்சு clearly means a coin, though it is impossible now to determine its value.

2 The expressions within square brackets are conjecturally supplied, while those within the semi-circular brackets are additions to render the meaning clearer.

3 Biḍâra is a corruption of Bhaṭṭâraka. in which full form, too, the word is often found.

of January 1144[1]. How long his reign lasted, or when it actually commenced, we have as yet no means of determining; but that it did last for 18 years and 5 months *at the least* is established by the two inscriptions before us. The addition in the second document of Tiruvaḍi, or holy feet, to the name of the sovereign, if it means anything at all,[2] may be taken to indicate the expansion of his dominions and the consequent growth of his power, since we first met him. The re-establishment of his authority, so far to the north as Trivandram, affords of course clearer evidence of the same. Though I have not yet been able to identify the exact locality of Tenganâḍ, I have no doubt it must have embraced the seacoast from Têngâpatnam on the mouth of the Kuḻitturai river to Tiruvallam, including the famous seaport of Viliñam. The enemy, from whose hands Tenganâḍ is here recorded to have been recovered, may have been, therefore, the representatives of the very same Chola power which Kerala Varma in the earlier part of his career found it wise to conciliate.

As for other inferences from the inscription before us, particularly about the village associations, temple authorities, and the curious personage, Bhaṭṭâraka Tiruvaḍi, I would fain wait till our data accumulate.[3] It is quite the fashion nowadays to suppose that ancient Native Indian Government was despotism, pure and simple. I would wait, therefore, till more facts are brought to our notice about the constitution and powers of the early

---

1 (Though later studies show that the date of this inscription is 399, the statement continues to be true to this date. Later researches have revealed that in Kollam 320 Kodai Kerala Varma ruled over Venad *vide* Suchindram Inscriptions of this King, in Tr. A. S., Vol. II.

The inscriptions of Travancore published so far do not mention any other king for the period 301 to 319 – Ed.)

2 The Kings of Venad were always known to Literature, Tamil and Malayalam, as வேணாட்டடிகள்—the holy feet of Venad.

3 (The term Baṭṭârakar is used to denote the god. In this sense it is invariably employed in Tamil epigraphs – Mr. K.V. Subramania Iyer in Tr. A. S., Vol. V. – Ed.)

village associations of Travancore, before I venture to discuss the soundness of this general assumption. When once we remember the diverse secular functions the Hindu temples[1] were designed to discharge, besides being places of divine worship, we would feel we cannot be really too curious about their constitution and management. I would allow again the Budhistic monk, Bhaṭṭâraka to go through his slow evolution of Bhaṭṭâraka Tiruvaḍi, Badâra Tiruvaḍi, Baḷâra Tiruvaḍi and Pashâra Tiruvaḍi, before I identify him with our modern *Pishâraḍi*, whose puzzling position among the Malabar castes, half monk and half layman, is far from being accounted for by the silly and fanciful modern derivation of *Pishârakaḷ* + Ôḍi, *Pishârakaḷ* being more mysterious than *Pishâradi* itself[2]. On these and similar questions, therefore, I would beg to reserve my remarks till sufficient data accumulate before us. A word or two about the taxes and duties mentioned in our document would prove more pertinent to our present inquiry ; but I am sorry I have failed, even after repeated inspection of the original itself, to make out, not only the shorthand symbols[3] given to signify the quantity of paddy[4], but also what is intended to be read by the combination of letters which, as far as I can discern, look like '*chêvatu*' [5] and '*aḷagerutu*' [6]—terms which convey no intelligible meaning to me. From the context I take them to stand for certain

1 They were fortresses, treasuries, court-houses, parks, fairs, exhibition sheds, halls of learning and of pleasure, all in one.

2 I am sorry the Travancore Census Report, 1891, adopts this absurd derivation. See pages 743 and 755, Vol. I.

3 This applies to all subsequent inscriptions. The symbols are arbitrary contractions of words and numerals, and difficult, therefore, of conjecture.

4 (Symbol is read as denoting 217 in Tr. A. S.—Ed.)

5 (This is read as *Cheytu* (செய்து), Tr. A. S.—Ed.)

6 (*Nallerudu* is another form that occurs in inscriptions and is now accepted as an item of tax – Tr. A. S.—Ed.)

duties then levied. The tax on looms is clear enough, though there is no means of discovering its amount. It must have been but a trifle, considering the total expenditure charged on all the revenues set apart by this deed. The word *Nêli*[1] is another obsolete term, which I take to mean 'capital.' Considering the difficulties of the *Vatteḷuttu* alphabet in general, and the faintness of this inscription in particular, I have reason only to be gratified that it has served to attest at least Sri Vîra Kêraḷa Varma's rule in 1144 A.D. and the re-etablishment of his authority in *Tenganâd.*

We have to wait now for seventeen years more before we get a glimpse of another sovereign of Vênad. On Saturday, the 7th Iḍavam 336 M.E., the throne of Venad was graced by His Highness *Sri Vîra Ravi Varma Tiruvaḍi,* and here is my authority for the statement. It is a document in old Tamil, inscribed in four long lines on the southern wall of an old temple, in another deserted village near Olugunachêri, now called *Puravachêri,* a name as much fallen from its original proud designation of *Puravari Chatur Vêdi Mangalam,* as the village itself from its former pristine glory. For the sake of such of you as may wish to verify my document, I must add that the priest in charge of this temple is a heavily-worked inveterate pluralist, and his movements are more incalculable than most mundane phenomena, so that one ought to go prepared to stay at Olugunacheri for a week to catch a glimpse of this one servant of many gods and to be admitted into the courtyard of the pagoda. Yet if you believe the priest, (and it would be profane not to do so) the *pûjâs* are most regularly performed : only, if you go there in the day time, they would be performed in the night, and if you go there in the night, they would be over by day! Our document would run thus in English :—

1 (This is read as *Poli* – and it stands for interest, Tr. A. S.—Ed.)

No. 3[1] / 29 — OLD TAMIL / SEN TAMIL CURRENT.

Hail! Prosperity! In the year opposite the year 336, after the appearance of Kollam, with the sun six days old in the sign of Taurus (*i.e.*, the 7th Iḍavam), Saturday, Makayiram star,[2] was the following deed in *cadjan* passed :— The loyal chieftains of Sri Vîra Iravi Varma Tiruvaḍi, graciously ruling over Vênâd, declare that with the object of providing for the daily offerings to the Âḷvâr in (the temple of) Puravaravu, in Puravari Chatur Vêdi Mangalam, and for a *Nanda* lamp to the same deity, are granted under *Tiruviḍaiyâttam* tenure, to last as long as the moon and the stars endure, the following paddy lands, irrigated by the Chârâr channel of Tâḷakkuḍi, and by the waters of Cheyyânêri tank in Châravayal, viz., Unnantiṭṭai, measuring $\frac{1}{4} + \frac{2}{20} + \frac{1}{320}$ and Puduvûr Mûlai measuring $\frac{3}{20}$, making a total of $\frac{10}{20} + \frac{1}{320}$ lands, the dues on which at the rate of assessment obtaining in the village amounting to *Mâttâl* 7 · [illegible], the servants of this Âḷvâr, shall lease out, levy, and cause to be measured at the door of the *Paṇḍâra*[3] (granary), as per temple measure called *Puravariyân*, and conduct the above said expenses without failure. The four boundaries of the lands thus set apart are ordered to be marked off by demarcation stones bearing the emblem of the holy Discus, and in order that the allowances might continue without let or hindrance, this deed itself is commanded to be inscribed in stone and copper, in witness whereof are our signatures : Pullâlan Aiyan (signature): Chingan Rangan (signature): Nârâyanan Sankaran (signature) : Kôdai Dêvan (signature), and Sign Manual.

Here then we have a document attested by the sign manual of His Highness Sri Vira Ravi Varma himself to prove that he was on the throne of Travancore on the 7th

1 (Republished in Tr. A. S., Vol. VII, p. 2—Ed.)

2 *Makayiram* is Malayalam for *Mrugasîrsham*, a star about the head of Orion. It means here the lunar mansion on the day.

3 *Paṇḍâram* or *Bhaṇḍâram* means usually the king's treasury.

Idavam 336 M.E , or about the end of May 1161 A.D. It being but 17 years since we saw Sri Vira Kêraḷa Varma recovering possession of Tenganâd, we may rightly presume that Sri Vira Ravi Varma was his immediate successor. Pullâlan Aiyan[1] and others who signed this document were probably the feudal chieftains who conducted the administration of the day. Tâḷakkuḍi being in the very confines of the present eastern boundary of Travancore, we may take this grant as evidencing the extension of Venad sovereignty all over the south. It is noteworthy that the measurement of the lands given is in the style[2] still followed in the Tanjore District. There was further, about this time, no standard measures and weights anywhere in Southern India, each temple using its own under the name of the local deity. There are two revenue terms in this record, the significance of which I have not succeeded in finding out. These are *Tiruviḍaiyâttam*[3] tenure and *Mâttâl.*

On the western wall of the same temple at *Puravari* occurs another inscription in eight long lines relating to this identical grant; but a stone in the middle of the inscribed portion of the wall has been removed and replaced by another in the course of subsequent repairs, rendering our document thereby incomplete and enigmatic. It will be seen, therefore, that it is not altogether to be deplored that temples with historical associations do not receive frequent repairs! In the case before us, it is easy to supply the lost parts with the help of the related document I have just placed before you. With the omissions so made good, the inscription would read thus in English :—

---

1 *Aiyan* is here no title but the name of the person himself.

2 *Vide* Inscriptions Nos. 4 and 5 in Vol. II, *Part I, of South Indian Inscriptions,* for samples of this system of land measurement.

3 The word might be analysed into திரு+விடை+ஆள்+து+அம், and might then mean "the holy rule of the Bull," *i.e.*, the Siva's emblem, and hence perhaps tax free or temple tenure.

No. 4[1]/44 — OLD TAMIL / SEN TAMIL CURRENT.

Hail ! Prosperity ! In the year [opposite the year 336, since the appearance of Kollam][2] with the sun* days old in Taurus, Saturday, Makayiram star, the officers in charge of Nânjinâḍu and the villagers of Tâlakkuḍi, assembling together, did as follows : in accordance with the Royal proclamation issued by the loyal chieftains of [Sri Vira] Iravi Varma Tiruvaḍi [ruling graciously over Venad], to provide *Tiruchêṉiḍai* and *Tiru-Nandâ* lamp [for the Âḷvâr in Puravari], in Puravari Chatur Vêdi Mangalam, we the people of Tâḷakkuḍi [have caused demarcation stones bearing the emblem of the holy discus] to be put up at the boundaries of the paddy lands, [named Unnantiṭṭai measuring $\frac{1}{4} + \frac{2}{20} + \frac{1}{320}$ and Puduvûr Mûlai] measuring $\frac{3}{20}$, making in all $\frac{10}{20} + \frac{1}{320}$, and irrigated by the Chârâr channel of Tâḷakkuḍi-Kiḍachêri and by the waters of Cheyyânôri tank in Châravayal, and we [have made them over] to the servants of the Âḷvâr, so as to enable them [to levy from this day forwards the rent due from them according to the rate current in the village], subject to minor charges and deductions, for the purpose of providing, without failure, and as long as the moon and stars endure, for the daily expenses, as well as for a holy *Nanda* lamp, as graciously commanded ; in witness whereof, we the people of Tâḷakkuḍi (hereunto affix) our signatures. Arayan Pasitângi, signature, Kêralan Araiyan, signature, * * Vikraman Arangan, signature, Vêlân Kêraḷan *alias* Nânjinâṭṭu Mûvênta Vêḷân, signature. I * * * of Panayûr wrote this deed, and wrote it at the bidding of the servants of the Âḷvâr, and the people of Tâḷai ; [countersigned] * * * Kêraḷa Santôsha Pallavaraiyan, signature, Gôvindan Vikraman, signature, Anantan Sakrapâṇi, signature.

---

1 (Republished without acknowledgment in Tr. A S., Vol. VII, p. 8, referred to in Tr. A. S., Vol. V, p. 69.—Ed.)

2 The parts within the square brackets are those supplied.

The grant declared in the previous inscription would thus appear to have been actually executed on that very day,—a fact reflecting no small credit on the administration of those ancient times. This document confirms the inference we have already drawn with respect to the extent of the Venad Principality on that day, since the executive officers who complete the transaction are styled 'officers in charge of the affairs of Nânjinâḍ,'—Nanjinad[1] being the collective designation for the two southernmost *taluqs* of Travancore. The Chôḷa power then must have been by this time altogether extinct there; and it is quite possible that the Vaishnava temple at Puravari was thus patronized to spite the foreign Siva temple of Rajendra, not far from it. But it is always bad to attribute motives; and we shall, therefore, content ourselves with recording the fact that on the 7th of Iḍavam 336 M.E., Vira Ravi Varma ruled peacefully over all South Travancore, his affairs in Nânjinâḍ being administered by a triumvirate, Kêraḷa Santôsha Pallavaraiyan,[2] probably in command of the local forces, if we may judge from his title, and Gôvindan Vikraman and Anantan Sakrapâṇi, in charge of the civil administration. His ministers of State at the capital were, as we have already seen, the loyal chieftains, Pullâlan Aiyan, Chingan Rangan, Nârâyanan Sankaran, and Kôdai Dêvan. I would request you to note also in passing the part played by Araiyan Pasitângi and others, representing the village of Tâḷakkuḍi. It is remarkable that the people of Tâḷakkudi had the right to execute, and in a manner to ratify, the royal grant. The reservation as to minor charges and deductions, appearing in this inscription but absent in the former, would point to certain cesses, levied by village associations, on lands falling within their union.

---

1 It is indifferently spelt now *Nânjanâd* and *Nânjinâd*, the correct form being *Nânjilnâdu* meaning '*the land of ploughs.*'

2 Pallavaraiyan, meaning the king of the Pallavas, is an old military title. It was sometimes conferred also on men of letters as a special mark of royal favour, *e.g.*, on the author of "*Periya-purana.*"

More of this in its proper place. There is a word in this inscription which I do not quite understand, viz., *Tiru-chêṉidai*, though from the context it may be safely taken to signify some kind of daily offerings in Vaishnava temples.

On the southern wall of this temple, and not far from the inscription No. $\frac{3}{29}$ containing the royal grant of Unnan Tiṭṭai and other lands, is found a small document, in four short lines, recording another royal grant on the 8th of Chingam 342 M.E. It purports also to be issued under Sign Manual, though it does not mention the name of the sovereign, which, however, we would be justified in assuming to be the same as in the two preceding records, until contradicted by other evidence. It may be thus rendered into English :—

No. $\frac{5}{43.}$ OLD TAMIL
SEN TAMIL CURRENT.

Hail ! Prosperity ! In the year 342, after the appearance of Kollam, with the sun 7 days old in Leo, (*i.e.* the 8th of Chingam), was passed the following deed in *cadjan* :—The land granted under command to feed two wayworn Brahmin passengers, measure $\frac{12}{20}$ in * * * Nilakaṇdan Paṟṟu, and is irrigated by the river Kôttâṟu and the Kaicherai channel : Nârâyanan Kunṟan Pêraḷan, signature, Kaḷi Kunṟa Pêraḷan,[1] signature, and Sign Manual.

The brevity of this document would lead us to suppose that it was a sort of note, issued under royal signature, and transmitted by two of the private secretaries in the palace, to the ministers of State, with a view to have the usual more formal proclamation prepared and submitted. Anyhow, it may be taken to prove that Sri Vira Ravi Varma continued to rule Venad till at least the 8th day of Chingam 342 M.E., or about the end of August 1166.

Vira Ravi Varma, however, could not have enjoyed the throne of Venad much longer after that date, for we

---

1 This word is rather indistinct. From the way in which it is repeated it would appear to have been a kind of title.

have evidence to show that on the 10th Minam 348 M.E., it was occupied by another sovereign, *Sri Vira Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma.*[1] This evidence is obtained from an inscription in *Vatteḷuttu* at *Tiruvattar*, as it is now called, about 5 miles to the east of *Kuḷitturai*, which is itself half way between Trivandram and Olugunachêri. In the inscription before us the place is named *Tiru Vâttaṟu*, and the old Vaishṇava Tamil hymns, *Tiruvây moḷi*, agree with our record in that spelling.[2] But the Sanscrit *Stala Purâṇa*, in manuscript, with which this place is honoured, prefers obviously to follow its modern corrupt designation, and calls it *Chakra Tirta*, by way of translation. There could of course be not the least objection to the holy *Stala Purâṇa* using the modern name, but then it must surrender its insolent pretensions to antiquity. The work claims to be an integral portion of *Padma Purâṇa* and purports to report *verbatim*, in a series of ungrammatical *slôkas*, a discourse of Siva, at Mount Kailas, extolling to his spouse, the unequalled sanctity of *Tiruvattâr*, based mainly on the ground of certain dubious tactics, practised by the local deity on two supra-mundane monsters.[3] On things earthly, and still more on local matters of any historical import, the legend preserves absolute silence. Its writer, however, must have been evidently struck by the similarity of the temples and idols at Tiruvattar and Trivandram, as well as the identity of the dates of their principal feasts, since now and again he makes Siva compliment the former by calling it *Âdhyanandapura* or original Trivandram. It is on the southern wall of the main sanctuary at Tiruvattar that the document I am now to translate is found.

---

1 (It is assumed in Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, p. 27, that " the Tiruvattar epigraph informs us that Vira Udaiya Martanda Varma was not the King of Venad in Kollam 348 but was only the *yuvaraja*'.—Ed.)

2 " வாட்டாற்றானடிவணங்கி மாஞாலப்பிறப்பறுப்பான் " Similarly in all the 11 stanzas of the 9th *Pattu* in the *Pattâmpattu of Saḍha Gôpalvâr.*

3 These monsters are called Kêsan and Kêsi. Kêsan is killed and Kêsi, his sister, comes in the form of a stream to avenge the slaughter. The whole looks like an old Dravidian river myth, modified and adapted to suit the character of the local deity.

No. 6[1] / 10 **VATTELUTTU OLD MALAYALAM**

Hail ! Prosperity ! In the Kollam year 348, with Jupiter in Cancer, and the sun * * days old in Pisces (*i.e.* in the Malabar month Mînam), Thursday, Anusham star, Sri Vîra Udaiya Mârtâṭṭa[2] Varma Tiruvaḍi graciously reigning at Kôḷiḍaikkûṛu[3] in Venad, brought to Kîḷachchêri Palace, in Kôdai Nallûr, in the form of *Nêli*, 3 *slâkas* and 30 *aḷagachchu*, due on [or to be advanced on the security of] the lands belonging to Adichchan Udaiyannan and brothers, viz., Cheriyakarai Kûṭṭya Paṛai measuring * * * Mâttaṛai measuring * *, making in both * * *, in order that the fixed and regular allowances of *Paḷḷikoṇḍa*[4] *Perumâḷ* at Tiruvâṭṭaṛu, amounting to rice * * * [might be continued without failure] ; the income per harvest being * * *.

---

1 (This inscription was published in Tr. A. S., Vol. I, p. 296, without acknowledgment or reference and the date was read as 398. Mr. K. V. Subramania Iyer writes in Tr. A. S , Vol. IV, p. 27, thus :— "I lately examined this inscription and was able to effect some improvements in the former readings. The solar day which remained undeciphered had been read as 14. Though the second figure in 348 remains doubtful and can be read as 4, 6 or 9—all of which are equally possible owing to the damaged condition of the inscription—6 and 9 have to be rejected for the reason that neither 369 nor 398 represents a year in which Jupiter was in Karkataka as clearly stated in the record ; and it may also be said that the year 348 is one satisfying the condition. Mr. L. D. Swamikannu Pillai, who verified the astronomical detail furnished in this lithic record, says: "The position of Jupiter makes it clear that if it is one of the three years 348,368,398, it must be 348 Kollam (equal to A.D. 1172 - 73) when Jupiter was in Karkataka and not 368 or 398 when Jupiter could not by any means have been in Karkataka... arguing from these precedents, I should say the ' Mina 14 expired ' means what is ordinarily called the 15th day of the solar month of Mina or Panguni and this was no doubt Thursday 8th March A.D. 1173."

Dr. R. Schram of Vienna verified the date and said it to be 1173 A.D. Ind. Ant., Vol. 25, p. 9.—Ed.)

2 Mârtâṭṭa is an obvious error for Mârtâṇḍa.

3 (This word was read as 'Ilankuḍai' and translated as *yuvaraja* by Mr. Gopinatha Rao and Ilankûru and interpreted as the portion of the young (prince) by Mr. Subramania Iyer., in Tr. A. S.—Ed.)

4 The Perumal in a reclining posture as in Trivandram, Srirangam and Seringapatam.

This is one of the Vaṭṭeḻuttu inscriptions with me of which I cannot satisfy myself that I have found the full import. The only finite verb I can find in it is—"*Koṇḍuvannu,*" meaning "brought," occurring nearly at the very end of the document; but with the omissions and difficulties in the previous parts of the sentence, I cannot be sure that its nominative is Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma. The obsolete word "*Nêli,*" which we have already met in Inscription No. 2, may be taken here also to mean capital, or a sum of money. Both from the context and from the numerals following the terms, *Slâkai* and *Aḷagachchu* must refer to the currency then in use. *Slâka* usually means a metallic rod of silver or gold. According to Tamil *Nikaṇḍu,* it might mean also a superior kind of gem. All the three ideas, however, are closely related to one another and to money. It is quite possible that bars of silver or gold passed in those days, as currency, with or without Government stamp. "*Achchu*" of course, as in number 2, cannot but mean coin, the addition of *Aḷagu* (fair) being but expletive as in '*Aḻagia Attippêrôlai*' meaning the *fair* title-deed. But I see no means of determining the value of *Slâka* and *Achchu* either in themselves or in relation to one another. All that we can safely conjecture is that a considerable sum of money was taken to Kîḻachchêri Palace. Why it was taken to that place, when it was evidently meant to be utilized for the temple at Tiruvattar, is an embarrassing question, to which I can find no answer. It is equally difficult to understand how so large an amount came to be due from the lands owned by *Âdichchan Udaiyannan* and brothers. Since the last indistinct words of the document seem to indicate the quantity of paddy due every harvest, it is quite possible that the amount, instead of being taken from them, was only advanced to Udaiyannan and brothers on the security of their lands, and on the understanding that a stated quantity of paddy would be delivered every harvest in return therefor. Hence the alternative construction given in the translation above. On

the whole, therefore, the document before us must be put down as one yet demanding attention and study.

Nevertheless, for our main purpose in this connexion, it is as good a record as any we have yet had, for it affords indubitable evidence of the reign of Sri Vira Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma in Mînam 348 M.E., or approximately speaking in March 1173. It being but six years since we met Ravi Varma instituting the second grant at Puravari, there can be no legitimate doubt of Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma being his immediate successor. The document gives us further the valuable information that Kôḷiḍaikkûṛu was the capital of Venad—at any rate, on the date of this record. As far as I can make out, this capital of Vira Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa is identical with the now insignificant village of Kuḷikôd, near Padmanâbhapuram, Kôdai Nallûr being a well-known place thereabouts. If my identification is correct, the way in which the old name has been corrupted by usage might throw light upon the original name of our modern Calicut or *Kôḷikôd.* It would appear more reasonable to derive *Kôḷikôd* from *Kôḷiḍai Kûṛu,*—"*the suitable middle part*" of Malabar,—than to trace it to the clever fiction that the territory was handed over to the *Zamorin,* to be measured out by the distance to which the *crowing of the cock could be heard.*[1] However that be, if *Kôḷiḍai Kûṛu* was ever "the suitable centre" of Venad, as the name indicates, we have some means of determining the original extent of that ancient principality. Taking this village or Padmanâbhapuram as the centre and Cape Comorin as a point in the circumference, Venad, as it originally stood, could not have embraced any territory further north of Trivandram. But the etymology of geographical names is not always a reliable guide to history.

1 This fanciful derivation illustrates how traditions are invented in Southern India. It is but typical of what uniformly takes place with respect to most names of castes, villages, and customs.

But, whatever might have been the original extent of Venad, in the 4th Malabar century, it did include Trivandram, its present capital. For in 365 M.E. we find *Âditya Râma Varma* making a present of a drum to the temple of Krishna in this town. The gift is recorded in a Sanskrit slôka inscribed in old Malayalam characters on the northern wall of the inner shrine of the *Gôsâla Krishna* temple. With the exception of those at Mitrânandapuram this shrine appears to me to be the oldest in the Trivandram Fort. In itself, it is a comparatively small building, standing in the middle of a rectangular outer temple called Gôsâla or cowshed, and the whole is situated in rather inconvenient contact with the north-western corner of the square formed by the corridors of the grand Sri Bali Maṇḍapam of Sri Padmanâbha, the presiding deity of the place. Tradition, for the nonce realistic, points to a worn out granite tub, still remaining close to the wall bearing our inscription, as a memento of the good old days when the poor folks of the village resorted to it to whet their knives and hatchets before proceeding to the jungles around to fell and fetch fuel. The explanation suits very well, indeed, the appearance of the time-honoured tub, and also what may be otherwise inferred as to the past of the locality. It would be but easy and pleasant exercise for historical imagination to picture, with the abundant evidences yet available, the real and original 'cowshed' and the patches of paddy lands and plantain *tôpes* by which it was then on all sides surrounded. But long before the date of our document, the primeval peace and solitude of the place must have been to a large extent broken. The Brahmin landlords of the north must have, centuries prior, planted a colony at Mitranandapuram as an outpost in their advance to the south.[1] The Gôsâla itself was now a shrine

1 (The copper plate inscriptions of the Mitranandapuram Mutt and the inscriptions found in the temple there, record the fact that the head of the Mutt was a greatly respected religious functionary ; cf. "Brahmaprajna-Bhatarar Tiruvadi being pleased to remain in the southern enclosure of the temple of Mitranandapuram, the Venad King Manikanta Rama Varman gave etc."—Tr. A. S., Vol. III.—Ed.)

worthy of a royal visit, and I feel inclined to think that the visit itself was induced by that Brahmin colony for some political purpose or other yet further north. At any rate, I fancy, it is to some learned member of that body we owe the *slôka* which to us commemorates the reign of Âditya Râma Varma in 365 M.E. The verse may be thus translated :—

No. 7[1]/86. ARCHAIC MALAYALAM[2] SANSCRIT VERSE.[3]

Hail! Prosperity! In Dhanus (Sagittarius) and when Life was at its height, Âditya Râma, who is the bearer of the State Umbrella of Kôda Mârtaṇḍa, the lord of Gôḷamba, and who is further the soul of the earth, both prosperous

1 (Mr. K. V. Subramania Iyer writes as follows in Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, p. 26:— "This record has been handled by two others, *viz.*, the late Prof. Kielhorn of Gottingen and the late Mr. T. A. Gopinatha Rao. Mr. Sundaram Pillai took the record as belonging to the time of a certain Âditya Varma and thought a chronogram was intended by the writer in the word 'Martanda' and this view was adopted by the late Mr. Gopinatha Rao who also regarded it as an inscription of King Âditya Varma, though Prof. Kielhorn had before him held that 'it belonged to Martanda Varma and there was no word in the epigraph which would stand for a chronogram'. While Mr. Sundaram Pillai ascribed it to Kollam 365, Prof. Kielhorn declared that it must belong to the 13th century A.D." Mr. K. V. Subramania Iyer takes the Sanscrit verse published here as a portion of a bilingual inscription and the Vaṭṭeḻuttu portion found inscribed on the same wall of the temple as a part of it. He holds the view that Âditya Varma is a private individual and "he had nothing to do with the possession of Venad and cannot be raised to the proud position of a King and made a remote descendant of the famous Martanda Varman who instituted the Kollam era" and Kollam 370-1 to be the probable date of the record. See Tr. A. S. Vol. III, pp. 46-52 and Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, pp. 26-28.

This inscription is republished in Tr A. S. Vol. III, p. 46.—Ed.)

2 Many letters of Archaic Malayalam differ from the characters now in use, though the affinity between the two sets is easy to discover.

3 The metre of this verse is *Sriddhara Vrittam*.

and honoured, dedicated, after making due oblations, to the Lotus-eyed of the temple of the Cowshed, in (the town of) Syânandûra, a good drum made of silver, as huge as Mantara mountain, and as lustrous as all the foam of the oceans gathered together.

Such is the literal rendering of the rather cleverly composed Sanscrit distich before us. But as we know cleverness in Indian versification means to a large extent skill in the use of tantalizing phraseology, with a view to suggest and yet to hide the thoughts to be expressed, it behoves us to look into the lines a little closer.

Though the word Dhanus (Bow) is evidently intended to suggest that Âditya Râma was not only the inheritor of the State Umbrella of Kôda Mârtâṇḍa, but also the carrier of his bow, or perhaps his standard bearing that device of the Chôra sovereigns,[1] yet being in its locative case, it cannot but mean 'the month of Dhanus,' *i.e.*, the month in which the sun is in the sign of Sagittarius. Similarly, the expression when *Life* was at its height has its obvious astronomical interpretation. '*Jiva*' means Jupiter, and astrology assumes that that favourite planet reaches its 'height,' when it is in the sign of Cancer.[2] The use of the word '*Gôlamba*' again, or as it is now more usually spelt '*Kôḷamba*' indicates that somewhere close by lies buried the year of the inscription in the

---

1 In old classical times, the Bow was the emblem of the Cheras as the Fish was of the Pandyas and the Tiger of the Cholas.

2 This is certainly the interpretation according to current astrology, but it scarcely seems to me to be correct. Jupiter was in the sign of Cancer in 348 according to our inscription No. 6, and his period of revolution being roughly taken as 12 years, it is impossible that he should be again in the same sign in 365. It is possible that astrology has changed, or that the expression 'at its height' has no special astrological meaning in this connection. On the other hand, since Inscription No. 8A assigns Jupiter to Virgo in 368, he must have been somewhere about Cancer in 365. But inscriptions Nos. 9 and 10 again locate Jupiter in Cancer in 371 and 384, and all the subsequent notices agree with them. All the references to astronomical facts in these early records require verification. I give them in these pages as I find them.

Kôḷamba or Kollam Era, the discovery of which, however, in old verses like the one before us, is often as hard as a feat of astrological divination itself. A reference to Dr. Burnell's *Palæography,* pages 77 to 80, would show the extent of the resources at the disposal of the Sanscrit versifier to find convenient sepulchres for the dates he might occasionally condescend to embalm in his measured lines. But in the case before us, there can be no doubt that the symbolism followed is what is called the '*Kaḍabayâdi*' system of giving conventional numerical values to the letters of the alphabet; and the word whose component letters are here to be so valued can be none else than '*Mârtâṇḍa,*'– the word immediately preceding the term '*Kôḷamba.*' No other term in the neighbourhood is capable of expressing a possible past date in that Era. I scruple not, therefore, to conclude that the date of this document is Dhanus 365 M.E., or about the end of December 1189, when, astrologically speaking, Jupiter was in the zenith of his power in that part of the Heavens which is graced by the figure of the crab.

But for our present inquiry, it is more to the point to know who was then in power here below in Travancore. "The prosperous and honoured soul of the earth" at that period, we are told, was one Âditya Râma. But with all my appreciation for the poet's feelings of loyalty, and commiseration for the common weakness to exaggerate the glory of the powers that are, I cannot but still complain that he did not somehow manage to put in 'Venad' instead of the whole earth. For as the lines now stand; it is not impossible for a sceptic to question whether Âditya Râma did really belong to that Venad Dynasty, whose history we are here engaged in tracing. I do not, however, for my part, feel that there can be much scope for any legitimate doubt on the point, particularly with the information placed at our disposal by the inscriptions Nos. 9 and 10 in the sequel. But the poet seems to make amends for this defect by the mention of an important ancestor of Âditya

Rama. Âditya Râma is said to have been "the bearer of the umbrella of Kôda Mârtâṇḍa, the lord of Kôḷamba,' which cannot but mean that he inherited from the latter his umbrella, or crown as we would now say, since one described as the 'honoured soul of the earth' could not have been the personal servant of another individual. Who then was this Kôda Mârtâṇḍa, " the *Îsa* or the God of Kôḷamba"? Kôḷamba is usually taken as the Sanscrit name for the Malabar Era otherwise called the Kollam year. It is sometimes assumed[1] to have been the ancient name of the seemingly modern seaport of Quilon, about 40 miles to the north of Trivandram. Whether the identification of Kôḷamba with Quilon in Travancore be correct or incorrect, it means, in the couplet before us, only the Era, and not any particular place, unless, of course, a play upon the word is intended. I am inclined, therefore, to interpret 'God of Kôḷamba' to mean but one who instituted or took part in the institution of the Era of Kôḷamba, or the Kollam year, in which case there would be also an obvious justification for the mention of this ancestor in particular, famous as he must have been in those early days. The traditional account of the origin of the Kollam Era, as given in Mr. Shangoonny Menon's History, lends all support to this interpretation, which, in simple fairness, I must say, struck me as the one most natural *altogether independent of that account.* "In the Kali year 3926 (825 A.D.) when Udaiya Martanda Varma was residing in Kollam[2] (Quilon), he convened a council of all the learned men of Kerala with the object of introducing a new era, and after making some astronomical researches and calculating the solar movements throughout the 12 signs

---

1 For instance, *vide* page 163, Part III, Travancore Government Almanac for 1894.

2 According to this tradition then, the Era has nothing to do with the foundation or 'refoundation' of the town of Quilon, as stated in the Travancore Government Almanac, page 162, Part III. Our inscriptions, however, allude to the '*appearance*' of Kollam, which I take to mean the 'institution' of the era, and not the foundation of any town. No town of any magnitude is known to have been founded in Malabar to give rise to an Era.

of the Zodiac and counting scientifically the number of days occupied in this revolution in every month, it was resolved to adopt the new era from the first of Chingam of that year, the 15th August 825, as Kollam year one, and to call it the solar year."[1] Whatever might be thought of this explanation of the origin of the era, there can be no doubt that tradition reckons one *Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma* as having taken part in its institution. The change from *Kôdai Mârtâṇḍa* of our inscription to *Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa* of the tradition is easy and natural, the latter being a more frequent, as well as a more significant, adjunct of Mârtâṇḍa, in the more favoured Sanscrit language than the Malayalam word 'Kôda.' In justice to Mr. Shangoonny Menon, I must note also that I find in his pages a mention of Âditya Varma as the Sovereign of Travancore about the date of our record. "In like manner," writes this author, "the present Poonjat Rajah, who was a close relation of the Pandyan dynasty, emigrated to Travancore, and the hill territories of Poonjar were assigned as the residence of his family during the reign of king Aditya Varma of Travancore in 364 M.E. (1189 A.D.)."[2] We have only to expand *Âditya Varma* into *Âditya Râma Varma* to make the name accord with our inscriptions. It would be extremely interesting indeed to prove, with the help of Mr. Shangoonny Menon's records, *could we but get hold of them,* that Âditya Râma Varma, just a year previous to the date of his dedication of the drum to the temple of Gôsâla at Trivandram, was in a position to assign away to a fugitive foreign Royal family a territory so far in the north as Poonjar.[3] However that be, we have, I believe, sufficient evidence to maintain, in the meantime, that Âditya Râma Varma ruled over Venad in the Malabar

1 *Vide* page 88, Shangoonny Menon's *History of Travancore.*

2 Page 92, Shangoonny Menon's *History of Travancore.*

3 Poonjar, or Pûññâru, is on the borders of the Madura District further to the north of Peermade. There is every likelihood of the old chieftain of this place having had some relation or other with Madura. His family deity to this day is '*Mînâkshi of Madura.*'

month of Dhanus 365 M.E, and that his ancestor, Kôda Mârtâṇḍa Varma, was the ruler of the same Kingdom, in the Kollam year one, *i.e.*, about August 824.

Permit me now to submit to you two small fragments, unworthy of your attention, but for the important quarter from which they come. Next to Trivandram itself, the place now most closely associated with the ruling Royal family is Âṟṟingal, about 22 miles to the north of Trivandram, and situated on the northern bank of the Vâmanapuram river, about four miles from its mouth in the Anjengo backwaters. The female members of the Royal House are now known as the *Râṇîs of Âṟṟingal*, and the village and the country thereabouts are still regarded as their private property. Each Travancore Sovereign has now to visit the place soon after his coronation to complete the ceremonies in connection therewith, and he is expected further to renew that visit every year of his reign. It is difficult to believe that such attentions and honours are allowed to the spot, simply because of an accident of a palace having been constructed there, to accommodate two adopted *Râṇîs*, as stated by Mr. Shangoonny Menon. "During the 5th century M.E, and in the reign of King Aditya Varma, the Travancore Royal family was under the necessity of adopting two females from the Kolathnad Royal family, and a royal residence was constructed at Attingal, for the residence of the two Ranîs, and they were installed as Attingal Mootha Thampuran and Elia Thumpuran, *i.e.*, Senior and Junior Ranîs of Attingal. The country around Attingal was assigned to them, and the revenue derived therefrom was placed at their disposal." [1] Until we know for certain the nature of the authority on which this statement is based, we may scruple to accept the account, as a sufficient explanation of the anomalous relation of Âṟṟingal to the Royal Household. Even assuming that a particular King of Venad in the 5th

1 Page 93, Shangoonny Menon's *History of Travancore*.

century went so far out of his way as to look to Kôlatnâḍ for heirs to his own dominions, it is still, I am afraid, not very likely that the fair members, so introduced into his own family, would be located, in those troublesome days, altogether away from South Travancore, the acknowledged seat of his own power. Antecedent probability is in favour of Âṟṟingal having been at one time an independent principality, the first of those merged later on into Venad. The early aggressive vigour of the kingdom of Venad, meeting with insuperable difficulties in the more exposed and troublesome eastern border, over which it had once extended itself, as proved by the inscriptions said to exist in Chêra Mahâ Dêvi and other villages of South Tinnevelly,[1] must have next turned itself to the north, where evidently it found freer scope for exercise. The first State then to be absorbed would naturally be Âṟṟingal, supposing it was then independent. And to account for the facts, we have next only to assume that for conciliating the newly added province, an alliance through marriage or adoption was effected with the House of Âṟṟingal, the name *Rânîs of Âṟṟingal* being continued, with the same object and in the same manner, as in the familiar case of the "*Prince of Wales.*" A strong presumption is raised in favour of such a hypothesis by the fact of *Kîḻppêrûr* being found annexed as the house name of the Venad Princes in later inscriptions. *Kîḻppêrûr* is an old and ruined village, unapproachable by cart or boat, about 8 miles to the north-east of Âṟṟingal. The country about Âṟṟingal seems to have been known in early times as *Kûpadêsam*,[2]—a province altogether distinct

1 Plenty of valuable inscriptions are found in several old villages of this district, which, as far as I know, have not yet seen the light of day, both literally and metaphorically! *Chêra Mahâ Dêvi* is now spelt Shermadevi.

2 Dr. Gundert thinks that *Kûpa Râjyam* was probably identical with *Kumbalam*, but notes at the same time that 'other manuscripts exchange it for *Mûshikam*, the most southern quarter., *Kumbalam*, as far as I am aware, is between Cochin and Alleppy. Âṟṟingal would be the most southern quarter excepting Venad.

from Venad. An inscription of Râjarâja Chôla dated in the 30th year of his reign claims for him a decisive victory over the *King of the Kupakâs*. The Tamil Poem, *Kalingattu Parani*, of the days of Kulôttunga Chola, enumerates the *Kupakâs* among the subject races that paid tribute to that Emperor.[1] The identification of Aṟṟingal with *Kupadêsam* is rendered almost certain by an inscription in the *Âpanêswara* temple, about 2 miles from Aṟṟingal, dated as late as 751 of the Malabar Era, which speaks of the princess who repaired that shrine as the *Queen of the Kupakâs*. If *Kûpa Râjyam* and Venad were thus at one time two coordinate provinces of Malabar, and if, in later times, we find the Princes of the latter appropriating to themselves, as their *House name*, the name of a locality situated in the former, it cannot be a violent assumption to suppose that the two were originally independent principalities, and that their amalgamation took place under such circumstances as led to a compromise, the weaker party submitting to the stronger on the condition of the stronger appropriating, not only the kingdom, but also the family name of the weaker. In short, it looks not in the least unlikely that when the power of Venad prevailed over Aṟṟingal, some matrimonial or other alliance was concluded which naturally led the blood of Aṟṟingal to prevail, in its turn, in the veins of the Venad Princes.

But of course all this is more or less pure speculation, and must remain as such only, until it can find support in inscriptions or other indubitable facts. Unfortunately, though Aṟṟingal has within a small area more than four pretty decent temples, testifying to its once affluent circumstances, there is in none of them any inscription referring to early historical facts. The temple that would appear to be now most closely associated with the palace is the one called '*Puttankâvu*' or 'new grove,'

---

1 *Vide* Verse 8, Chapter XI, *Kalingattu Parani*.

dedicated to *Bhagavati.* It is Bhagavati again that is worshipped in the old local palace, under the name of '*Palliarai Bhagavati,*' or 'The bed chamber Bhagavati.' It is rather difficult to determine whether 'the Bhagavati of the bed chamber' is really a goddess, or only a deified ancestor, say the last of the independent queens of Arringal. To the west of the palace, and in close contiguity with the principal *Vishnu* temple of the station, stands a small neat shrine, dedicated to *Peru Udaiyâr,*[1] apparently the same deity as is worshipped in Rájarája Chôla's temple at Tanjore, but sadly unlike that model in having no inscriptions whatever. About two miles to the east of Arringal, and not far to the west of the populous Brahmin village, called Avanamchêri,[2] lies a petty hamlet with the historical name of *Vira Kêralam,* now corrupted into *Vîranam.* An old neglected temple in this village owns the earliest inscriptions I can find in this locality. There are two of them in this temple, but both of them are extremely disappointing fragments. The first is inscribed on the north-eastern corner of the shrine itself, while the second is engraved on the altar outside the square enclosure now in ruins. How sadly incomplete they are will be seen from the renderings below :—

No. 8A / 83 — VATTELUTTU / TAMIL

Hail! Prosperity! In the Kollam year 368, with Jupiter in Virgo, and the sun two days' old in Taurus, Kilp * *

---

1 *Peru Udaiyâr* does not mean, as both people and *pandits* now generally suppose, the 'God of copious clothing,' but the "*great Lord or Master.*" Udaiyâr was further the family name of Rajaraja and other Chôlas of his dynasty.

2 It is curious how false learning interferes with etymology. Fastidious scholars now pronounce this name *Avanavancheri,* and suppose it to signify 'every one's own village,' and not 'the village with a market' as it may be so naturally and so easily taken to mean.

No. 8B/83. VATTELUTTU / TAMIL.

Sri Dêvadâram[1] Kêraḷa Varma Tiruvaḍi graciously consecrated [this shrine].

It is of course impossible now to say whether the two broken inscriptions form parts of the same record, or even whether they relate to the same subject. But should we venture to connect them together, which of course is by no means safe, though not an unprecedented procedure in Epigraphy, we could have evidence of some sort for the date of another sovereign, presumably of Venad. I say *presumably* only, because it is quite possible that Kêraḷa Varma who founded this temple belonged to an independent principality, say of Âṟṟingal itself. The word *Kîḻppêrûr*, with the first syllable of which the first fragment breaks off, is intended to refer no doubt to *Kîḻpperûr Illam or House*, by which the ruling family is designated in later inscriptions; but since earlier documents in my possession do not mention any such house name, it is by itself no guarantee that the reference is to the Venad dynasty, at least before its fusion with the Âṟṟingal or some other more northern royal House as observed above. Only after these possible sources of error are duly provided for, can we conclude, even supposing the two fragments to relate to the same subject matter, that there reigned over Venad one Kêraḷa Varma Tiruvaḍi about the beginning of Iḍavam 368 M.E., or about the latter half of May 1193. Still as the balance of evidence is in favour of such a presumption, we will provisionally call him Vîra Kêraḷa Varma II,—the prefix Vîra, which occurs invariably in all the known old names of the dynasty, being preserved to us in the name of the village where the record is found. We shall, of course, await the result of further researches to convert the presumption into a fact.

---

1 The word is not *Dêvadâm*, but clearly *Dêvadâram*, though I cannot make out what it means.

But no such scruple need be entertained to pronounce that on the 25th of Mêḍam 371, the ancient throne of Venad was occupied by His Highness *Sri Vîra Rama Varma Tiruvaḍi.* My authority for the statement is a long *Vaṭṭeḻuttu* record in 9 lines, inscribed on the southern wall of a small temple, in a village now called Kuṇamgarai, to the south-east of the Veḷḷâṇi fresh water lake, about 8 miles to the south of Trivandram. It would read thus if translated :—

No. $\frac{9}{60}$.[1] VATTELUTTU
OLD MALAYALAM.

Hail ! Prosperity ! In the Kollam year 371, with Jupiter in Cancer, and the sun 24 days old in Aries, is made the following grant :—The loyal chieftains of Sri Vîra Rama Varma Tiruvaḍi, graciously ruling over Venad, make over in writing, as a solemn gift ratified with water, the (locality of) *Sêrikkal,* in Chemkêṭṭaṟu, belonging to the said chieftains, to Vána Mâdhava[2] Nârayaṇa Viṇṇagar Aḻván of Tirukkuṇagarai, to provide for all his daily expenses, and one holy *Nanda* lamp. From this time forwards, the manager of the temple of Tirukkuṇagarai shall, under the supervision of *the Six Hundred* of Venad and of the district officers and agents, take sole possession of all things whatsoever in this *Sêrikkal,* with the exception of the paddy land, granted already under command by the said chieftains to meet the expenses of the *Bhattâraka* of Nêḻiyûr, and the manager shall duly supply according to the regulated measurement, four *nâḻies* of rice of proper quality for holy offerings, and also one holy *Nanda* lamp. The paddy per year required to provide the daily offerings of four *nâḻies* of rice, exclusive of pounding charges, amounting to 10 *Kâl* (?) and 24 *Kalams,* and the ghee and thread, required every day for the holy *Nanda* lamp, should be supplied without failure. The expenses shall be met out of the proceeds of the '*ûrâḷ*'

1 (This is republished in Tr. A. S., Vol. III, p. 33—Ed.).

2 Yadava—(*Ibid*)

lands on both the sides, the lower and the higher, of Chenkôṭṭâṛu, and also the higher fields and Koḍumkarai compound, both falling under the *Kâràṇmai* tenure, as well as from the (labour of the) predial slaves thereunto attached, all of which shall be now forthwith taken possession of (by the said manager). If the supply fails once, double the default shall be paid If twice, twice the default and fine. If thrice, *the Six Hundred*, the officers, and the *Valanjiars* of the 18 districts shall institute inquiries, and see to carry out this arrangement without failure, as long as the moon and the stars endure. Pillars[1] having been raised so as to mark and include the four limits thereof, this *sêri* (or portion of a village) is granted, under the *Tiruvidaiyâttam* tenure, according to Royal command ; all of which facts (the following) do know (and can attest), viz., Kaṇḍan Kaṇḍan of Tâkka Kokka Compound, Kêraḷan Îswaran[2] of Tánamaṇkoṭṭam, Âdi Tiruvikraman Parnan[3] and Gôvindan Kumâran of Paṭṭâḷi. This is in my hand, Kaṇḍan Udaiyanan of Kaitavây (signature)[4].

Thus then, beyond all doubt, there reigned over Venad on the 25th Mêḍam 371 M.E. or about the beginning of May 1196, His Highness Sri Vîra Râma Varma Tiruvaḍi.[5]

---

1 தோரணம் is the word used, which means according to Dr. Gundert, 'Post with an inscription or device.'

2 Read as "Suvaran" in Tr. A. S., Vol. III, p. 39.

3 Read as Vikkiraman Parannavan of Punalur – (*Ibid*).

4 The rest of the persons here named do not sign the deed, each says only 'he knows.'

5 "Mitranandapuram Inscription is a record of the Venadu King Manikantha Rama Varman and is dated in the first day of Kumbam of the year in which Jupiter was in Karkataka rasi. That the king mentioned in this epigraph is none other than Vira Rama Varman of the Vellayani inscription is proved beyond all doubt by the fact, Gôvindan Kumâran of Pâṭṭâli, Vikkiraman Parannavan of Punalur and Kandan Udaiyanan of Kaitavay figure in both the records, the first two as witnesses and the last as the writer of the document. The full name of the king may have been Vira Manikantha Rama Varman."—Tr. A. S., Vol. III, p. 28.

It is but one month and 23 years since we came across Sri Vira Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma at Tiruvaṭṭar, in our inscription No. 6—the last firm ground we had. The interval cannot surely be considered too large for one reign, supposing we are constrained by further researches to reject, as foreign to the Dynasty, both Âditya Râma Varma of the Gôsâla inscription, and Kêraḷa Varma II of the Âṟṟingal fragments. But the latter contingency, at any rate, as far as Âditya Râma is concerned, is so far improbable, that it may be well set aside, except in the way of satisfying the conscience of the ultra-sceptical. If we admit then either of these two names, we abridge the interval respectively to six or three years :—periods too short to disturb in the least our belief in the uninterrupted succession of the sovereigns our records have served us to bring to light.[1]

Before quitting the inscription in hand, I would just call your attention to two or three striking features in the social economy of the times. Besides the village associations we have already noticed, Venad, it would appear, had for the whole State an important public body under the name of " The Six Hundred," [2] to supervise, for one thing

---

1 Further researches have shown that Vira Rama Varman and whose full name should be Vira Manikantha Rama Varman succeeded Martanda Varman on the throne of Venadu in Dec. 1195 or Jan. 1196 i.e., Vrichigom or Dhanu 371 M.E. (see. Tr. A. S., Vol. III, p. 28). At the time of Tiruvattar inscription (No. 6) Sri Vira Udaya Martanda Varma is taken by later writers to have been only a prince, and he is accepted as the immediate predecessor in throne to the king referred to in this inscription (see Tr. A. S., Vols. III and IV). Later researches have not so far brought out anything to disturb the belief in the uninterrupted succession of the sovereigns of these records. – Ed.

2 " The phrase வேணாட்டறுநூற்றுவரும் is similar to நன்றுழைநாடு வாழுமவர் முந்நூற்றுவரும், அறுநூற்றுவரும், அஞ்சுவண்ணமும் மணிக்கிராமமும், இலகூழுவாயிரவர், நாற்பத்தெண்ணாயிரவர் etc.........the figures must refer to the number of persons who originally colonised the particular tracts with whose names they are mentioned and that every descendant of theirs was entitled to being called one of the clan or body" – Tr. A. S., III, p. 35. Even now some Tamilians living in some parts of N. Travancore call themselves அஞ்ஞூற்றுவர். – Ed.

the working of temples and charities connected therewith. What other powers and privileges this remarkable corporation of "The Six Hundred" was in possession of, future investigation can alone determine. But a number so large, nearly as large as the British House of Commons, could not have been meant, in so small a state as Venad was in the 12th century, for the single function of temple supervision. There is an allusion again in this record to the *Vaḷanjiars* of the 18 districts. The 18 districts were, no doubt, the 18 administrative divisions of Venad. Some of the names of these districts we might come ácross in the sequel. But who the *Vaḷanjiars* of the districts were is a more puzzling question.[1] As far as I can make out, the word reads only as *Vaḷanjiar*, but neither in Tamil nor in Malayalam am I aware of any current term of that description. It is an obvious derivative from the Tamil word '*Vaḷam*,' and the leading meaning of that term is 'greatness, dignity or honour.' If I am right in my reading, we may reasonably presume that the eighteen *Vaḷanjiars* were the 18 local magnates, or feudal Barons of the Realm. They were, as far as I can see, not men in the Royal service, who are always described as those who carry out *Paṇi* meaning 'work,' or *Kâryam* meaning 'business.' Both these latter descriptions occur in the document before us. But whatever was the difference in rank, emolument, and position, between those who carried out the '*work*' of the State, and those who attended to its '*business*,' the *Vaḷanjiars* of the land would appear to

1 ("In an unpublished Tamil Inscription which was received by Dr. Hultzsch from Mr. Bell, Archæology Commissioner of Ceylon, the term *Valanjiar* appears to denote a corporation consisting of various classes of merchants".—Mr. V. Venkayya in a foot note in Epigraphia India, Vol. IV, p. 296.—Ed.)

"From allied records (Mr. Rice's Coorg Inscriptions) of the Tamil and Kanarese districts we learn that these Valangiars were members of merchant guilds and belonged to eighteen countries, which, however, are not specifically named; that they were sometimes required to supervise, maintain or protect gifts made to temples and other charitable institutions and that they had influence and authority over large areas, probably on account of the wealth they possessed and owing to their trade relations,"—Mr. K. V. Subramania Iyer, in Tr. A. S.—Ed.

have been above them both. It looks probable that the "loyal chieftains," whom we have now met so frequently transacting business in the name of the king and forming as it were his Government or cabinet ministry, came from this class of *Valanjiars* or feudal Barons. That there were slaves attached to the land, and that there were two important kinds of land tenure, *Urâl or ûrâṇmai*, subject to the village associations, and *Kâraṇmai* or freeholds, directly under the State, are other interesting items of information we may glean from this record, though they may not be equally novel.

Allow now thirteen years to elapse, and we meet with another king of Venad, *Sri Vira Râman Kêraḷa Varma Tiruvaḍi.* I base this statement on a *Vatteḷuttu* inscription in Sri Padmanâbhaswamy's temple, in the capital itself. Unfortunately, however, it is a mutilated one, nearly one half of it being missing. All the greater is the pity of it, since the fine bold *Vatteḷuttu* characters, in which it is inscribed, would have otherwise made the copy of it, both palæographically and historically, one of the very best samples in my collection. The locality in which the mutilated document is now found can scarcely have been its original abode. The unhappy slab, so sadly in need of its engraved partner, cannot be said to be itself fairly above ground! Any one wishing to pay a visit of condolence to this mournful survivor must be prepared to assume a befitting humble attitude! Passing by the flag-staff and going in at the main eastern gate of the temple, let him walk straight on till he crosses the gateway of the second enclosure. There if he stands in as lowly an attitude of worship as he could possibly assume, he will descry, in the nethermost row of stones forming the low passage wall to his left, the gloomy object he is in quest of, neat and remarkably well dressed for the situation! But should he be curious to note the rather deep and clear furrows on its fallen face, his devotion ought to go deeper; he ought to lie flat on the ground leaning somewhat on the right side,

not much minding the unctuous floor beneath, or the untoward heels of the *Achchies*.[1] He might only then discover and fully realize the lamentable bereavement he has come to condole on. He would, doubtless, then find out for himself that the unlucky stone before him is but one of a well meaning and well wedded couple that did once stand shoulder to shoulder, through weal and woe, until the wayward Fates, envious of such firm and changeless attachment, sent them the curse of the *Mârâmut cooly*, who, dismembering their home and tearing them asunder, whirled away this particular individual to its present aimless posture, alone and away from its dear companion, and unable in consequence to make its two ends meet! But Science which can reconstruct a Plesiosaurus from a single tooth or a single rib, ought to be superior to the Fates! With the help of other inscriptions in my collection, I have in a measure succeeded in conjecturing what the two stones together would have told us; and with the omissions so supplied, the translation of the document would read thus:—

No. 10[2]/61. VATTELUTTU / OLD MALAYALAM.

Hail! Prosperity! In the Kollam year 384, with Jupiter in Cancer, [and the sun * days old in Gemini][3] in the presence

1 These are the sweeper women of the temple.

2 Though 'Early Sovereigns of Travancore' was published in 1894, the Superintendent of Archæology, Travancore, in the Travancore Archæological Series, Vol. IV, p. 66, wrote as follows when this inscription was republished in it:—

"This inscription is engraved on the base of the *maṇḍapa* in front of the central shrine of the Padmanabhaswamin temple at Trivandram. I am obliged to edit it with the help of an old impression, taken some years ago, though that is defective in several respects as I did not succeed in getting permission to take fresh impressions of this and others in the temple. A translation of this record by the late Mr. P. Sundaram Pillai of the Travancore Educational Service: 'With the lost portions ingeniously filled up appeared in Indian Antiquary, Vol. XXV, p. 305.' But the text of the inscription is not given anywhere." But the text was published in 'The Early Sovereigns of Travancore,' p. 70."—Ed.

3 The parts within square brackets are those supplied.

of the Tiruvânandapuram Association and its Sabhañjita, assembled in the southern [Hall] of Mitrânandapuram, [under the solemn] presidency of [the Bhaṭṭâraka],** tiṅga[1] Pallavarayan, [the loyal chieftain of] Sri Vira Irâmaṅ [Kêraḷa Varma Tiruvaḍi] of holy Venad[2], [made a free grant of certain lands] belonging to the said * tiṅga Pallavarayan, in Cheyyamaṉ and Kaḷattûr, [to be taken charge of by such and such,under such and such arran gements] with the object of providing daily four *nâḷies* of rice and condiments [partly] to be used as offering to the *Perumaḷ* of Tiruvânandapuram, and [partly] to feed one Brahmin, besides providing every year on the *Uttiram* star in (the month of) *Panguni*,[3] [a special feast or lustration]. [The daily offering to the *Perumâḷ* shall be made] when a man's shadow in the sun measures 12 ft.[4] [and the rice so offered shall be made over to such and such, who in return therefor] shall supply [each day] one garland to adorn the *Perumâḷ*. If the supply (of this stated quantity) of paddy fails once, [double the default shall be paid. If twice, twice the default and fine. If thrice in succession, the property shall be confiscated, and the amount of paddy recovered and measured out. [If any dispute arises thereon,] the case shall be taken to *Sri Pâdam* and the question then finally decided. To which effect [witness below our hands,**] of Kaitaviḷâgam. The first half-yearly [payments will be due] in the month of *Vrichigam* in Kollam 385.

---

1 Looks like a corruption of Chinga or Simha.

2 This " record was noticed by the late Mr. T. A. Gopinatha Rao in his Archæological Report for 1084 M.E., wherein the mutilated nature of the inscription was not recognised; and the king's name, which is only partially preserved as 'Venattadigal Sri Vira Raman' has been read as 'Ramannappallavaraiyan' connecting it with the first part of the next line, a good portion having lost at the right end of each line. Mr. Sundaram Pillai is well justified in thinking that this inscription is one belonging to the time of Vira Rama Kerala Varman of Venadu, for there is a record of that king dated five years later at Kadinangulam." –Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, p. 66.—Ed.

3 The principal festival of the temple still takes place about this time. Uttiram or Utram is a star about the tail of Leo Major.

4 Technically called *Pantîraḍi* or 'the 12th feet offering.'

Such in substance would be the document, if the portions lost are supplied, as far as it is now practicable to do, with the help of the context and of similar records with me. Happily for us, so far as important historical facts are concerned, there is little or no room for any legitimate doubt. For instance, comparing the inscription before us with the one to be given next, how can one reasonably doubt that the full name of the king who ruled Venad on the date of this document was *Sri Vira Irâman Kêraḷa Varma* ? The last letter in the part of the name actually found is (ங) ṅ, which can combine with no other letter in the alphabet than a K.; and our next inscription, which is but five years later, completes the name exactly as we should expect. Fortunately for us, again, the last word with which the opening line breaks off is Kollam 384,— the year of our document; and the date is confirmed, if need be, by the closing line, fixing the time for the payment of the first half-yearly dues in Vrichigam 385. This mention of the month with which the first half-year ends enables us further to fix the month of the grant itself as Mithunam preceding. Supposing a full half-year was to expire in Vrichigam for the payment to be due, we have only to shift the date of the grant a month earlier, *i e.*, Iḍavam 384 Thus, then, we may be perfectly sure that about May or June 1209[1], Venad was ruled over by Sri Vîra Râman Kêraḷa Varma Tiruvaḍi.

Dr. Robert Schram, Vienna, in Ind. Ant., Vol. 25, p. 9: - "Jupiter ought to be in Cancer, but he had really left this sign for some months and was far advanced in Leo. Yet this is easily explained when we consider the contents of the inscription. The words "and the sun* days old in Gemini" are supplied. As the last lines of the document in question speak of a first halfyearly payment due in Vrichigom 385, Mr. Sundaram Pillai supposes that the document itself was made half a year before Vrichigom 385 which would bring us to Mithunam or Idavom 384. But as this supposition does not agree with Jupiter's place, there can scarcely be any doubt that the document, instead of being made half a year before the first payment, was drawn up a whole year earlier or in one of the first months of 384 whilst Jupiter was yet in Cancer (i.e., between October 23,1208, and Jan. 14, 1209).

Dr. F. Kielhorn Gottingen held " the date of the inscription may be looked upon as correct because in the years quoted by the dates Jupiter really was in the positions assigned to it ". – Ed.

Certain other inferences, equally unquestionable, may be also made from the record in hand. For instance, it is impossible to doubt that in 384, Trivandram, like so many other villages, had a *sabha* or association, with a *Sabhanjita*,[1] chairman or secretary of its own, and that it used to meet on occasions of importance in the old temple at Mitrânandapuram, about a couple of furlongs to the west of the present shrine of Sri Padmanabha. The south-western corner of the courtyard of this temple is still pointed out as the sacred spot where *sabhas* used to meet of old, and the word '*Tek*' or south, in our inscription, gives no dubious guide to that spot. The raised floor of this hall still remains, but the roof, which must have resounded with the voice of many a wise council, is now no more. Fragments of apparently very old inscriptions[2] in the Mitrânandapuram temple speak also of memorable meetings of the *sabha* in the same "southern hall." These meetings are recorded to have taken place in the solemn presence of the *Baḍâra* or *Bhaṭṭâraka Tiruvaḍi* of the locality, enabling us thus to infer that the solemn presence, with which the meeting here recorded is said to have been honoured, must have been also of the same mysterious personality. It would appear further from an inscription at Suchîndram, dated 406, that there was at that time a senior *Baḍâra Tiruvaḍi* at Trivandram, in superior charge of the temple management. From this latter document, I am led also to suspect that by "*Sri Pâdam*," to which according to the record in hand the final appeal was to lie, in case of dispute in the administration of the land in question, is meant also the same religious functionary. The expression is now somehow or other used to designate the palace, where the

1 "Mr. P. Sundaram Pillai has read the word *Samanjitan* as *Sabhanjitan* and interpreted it as chairman or secretary, of the assembly. The interpretation is correct, but the word may be supposed to have come from '*Samai*' 'to form, make or create' and the text '*Samanjitan*' may refer to the convener of the Assembly"—Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, p. 66.—Ed.

2 See Ins. No. 3, 4 in Tr. A. S., Vol. III.

Queen-mother resides with the junior members of her family. But the context in the Suchîndram record, above referred to, militates against that modern application of the term.

Permit me now to call your attention to the curious way in which the town Trivandram is here spelt. Twice the word occurs in the portion of the inscription preserved to us, and on both occasions it is clearly spelt *Tiruvânandapuram* with a long â, meaning the holy city of *Blessedness*, and not as it is now universally understood, the city of *Ananta*, the serpent.[1] The deity, too, of the place is named *Perumâḷ*, the Great One, and not *Pudmanâbha*, the Lotus-Navelled. Is it possible that the city of *Blessedness* passed into one of *Ananta*, the serpent, with the transformation of the infinite and indefinite '*Great one*,' into the definite *Pudmanâbha*, whose mattress Ananta is? The analogy of Mitrânandapuram, the oldest temple of this town, lends support to the orthography of our inscription. But on the other hand, the Suchîndram inscription already referred to, spells the town in the usual modern fashion. So also does the hymn in *Tiruvâymoḷi*,[2] dedicated to the local deity, though, in this case, it is not as decisive as with Tiruvâṭṭar, since neither rhyme nor metre will be wholly spoiled by the substitution of one of the names for the other; and as far as I can remember, the town is mentioned nowhere else in Tamil literature. The Sanscrit name 'Syânandûra' only adds to our doubts and difficulties. Underivable proper names are by no means common in any Indian language, and in Sanscrit, there are but very few names of any class whose etymology cannot be traced to well-known roots. But 'Syânandûra,' though used familiarly by Sanscrit scholars both in inscriptions and in

1 In all the inscriptions found in the Krishna shrine in the Padmanabhaswami temple, Trevanduram and in the Mitrânandapuram copper plates this spelling is used—see inscriptions No. 13-14 and 15 in Tr. A. S., Vol. III.—Ed.

2 *Vide* 2nd *Pattu* in Pattâmpattu.

standard Malayalam works,[1] is analysable according to no known rules of grammar. It looks in the highest degree incredible that the Aryans of Upper India could ever have been under the necessity of inventing such an arbitrary and unanalysable name for so petty a village in the Dravidian country. In all probability then, it must be a Sanscritized corruption of a Dravidian name now altogether lost to us. The last syllable in *Syânandûra* sounds like *ûr*, the Tamil term for village or town, but what the preceding two syllables stand for, it is difficult to conjecture. If the word were *Sryânandûra*, we could have taken the body of it as made up of *Sri* or *Tiru* in Tamil, and *Ananda*, as preserved to us in the inscription before us as well as in the name Mitrânandapuram. But in that case there would have been no necessity for any corruption at all. My impression, therefore, is that the original native denomination of the town must have been a Dravidian word ending in *ûr*. The form '*Syânandûrapura*' occasionally met with tends to show that *ûra* was a part of the original name and no corruption of *Pura*, since '*pura*' is itself added to it. At any rate, the name could not have been either Ânandapuram, as in our inscription, or Anantapuram, as in current use, since both of them are good Sanscrit words needing no corruption to suit the genius of that language.

Returning now to our history, we have seen already that in Iḍavam or Mithunam 384, *i.e.*, 1209 A.D., the Government of the country was in the hands of Sri Vîra Irâman Kêraḷa Varma. This same sovereign was in power on Thursday, the 18th Mînam 389 M.E. If any one wishes to assure himself of the fact, it would cost him nothing more than a pleasant trip to *Kaḍinamkuḷam*, just 12 miles north of Trivandram, on the backwater route to Quilon. On the north-western wall of the temple of *Mahâdêva* in this village, he would find *Vatteḻuttu* inscription in four lines to the following effect :—

1 *Vide*, for example, *Vairâgia Chandrodaiyam*.

No. 11[1]/20 — VATTELUTTU / TAMIL.

Hail ! Prosperity ! In the year opposite the Kollam year 389, with Jupiter in Aquarius, and the sun 18 days old in Pisces, Thursday, Pushya star,[2] the 10th lunar day, Aries (being the rising sign), and Sri Vîra Irâman Kêraḷa Varma Tiruvaḍi of Kiḷppêrur being the gracious ruler of Venâd, Sri Vira Iraman Umaiyammai Viḷḷavar (?) Tiruvaḍi graciously caused the consecration (of the idol inside).

This neat inscription, giving full details of date up to the hour, would have been altogether unexceptionable, but for a difficult word which I am not quite sure of between *Umaiyammai* and *Tiruvaḍi.* We need not be particularly sorry for it, if we could be but sure that it was a part of the proper name of the founder of the temple. But as it stands, the proper name would appear to be completed with *Umaiyammai*, and the intractable word after it would seem to describe her status or position, in which case, indeed, it must be of supreme historical importance for us to know exactly what it was. The title *Tiruvaḍi* is found throughout our records reserved to Royalty. It occurs even here just a line above in connection with Sri Vira Iraman Kêrala Varma. Who then could this additional *Tiruvaḍi* be ? The name given, Sri Vira Iraman Umaiyammai, is a curious compound, Sri Vira Iraman being a masculine name, the first part in fact of the name of the then ruling king, and Umaiyammai, an appellation as distinctly feminine. In a compound name like this, usage as well as grammar would determine the sex of the person so named by the ultimate particle of the name, and we have, therefore, practically no doubt that the founder of the temple was a female, entitled, however, to Royal rank. The interesting question then

---

1 This inscription is republished in Travancore Archæological Series, Vol. IV, page 69, without acknowledgment and without any reference to its previous publication.—Ed.

2 Puyam or Pushyam is a star about the head of Hydra.

is, did she belong to the same Royal House as the then ruling sovereign, and if so, what was the particular relation in which she stood to that ruler. The full importance of the question will be perceived, only when the following facts are borne in mind. In the first place, this is the earliest record I have yet found of any female member of a Royal family, in a country where succession is believed to have been always in the female line. In the second place, it is also the first occasion, barring the Aṟṟingal fragments, where we have the family designation of *Kiḻppêrur*. And lastly, it must also be noticed that the temple at *Kaḍinam-kuḷam*, the institution of which this inscription records, is exactly equidistant between Trivandram and Aṟṟingal,—and therefore, a convenient stage in a journey from the one to the other. Both tradition and local inquiry would prove that the village of Kadinamkulam itself came into prominence, if not also into existence, only in consequence of its having been a suitable halting place, and that it continued to retain its importance, so long as it was used as such, *i.e.*, before the *Shânânkarai* canal connected the present capital with the backwater system of the north[1]. Is it fanciful or far-fetched then to suppose that the temple, of which our inscription records the foundation, was the direct fruit of extended political relations in the North, say, such as would arise from the annexation of Aṟṟingal with Venad and the amalgamation of their respective Royal Houses, assuming, as we have already done, the original independence of *Aṟṟingal* or *Kupadêsam*? If the hypothesis then is allowable, we might take both the *Princess Umaiyammai* and the present family name of *Kiḻppêrur* as coming from Aṟṟingal, and accruing to the Venad sovereign by right of adoption, marriage or other alliance. It is a pity, therefore, that the word after Umaiyammai, which might have helped to slove some of these difficulties, happens to be so unyielding. As far as I can make out, it looks only like '*Viḻḻavar*,' which

1 But Tr. A. S. will have it 'as a port in the Trivandram Division of the Travancore State !—(Ed.)

carries no meaning to my mind.[1] Until, therefore, further researches throw more light on the question, we should be content to accept the indistinct word to be a special title of Princess Umaiyammai in the Venad Royal House itself[2].

---

1 It is possible that *Villavar* is a mistake for *Yilaiyavar*, meaning the *younger*. There are one or two other dated *Vatteluttu* inscriptions in the place but unfortunately as the stones bearing them have been repeatedly white-washed, plastered over and painted upon, only portions of the lines are now open to view. I went to the spot again on the 16th June 1894 to try whether the broken lines could not help us over the difficulty, but returned not wiser than I went.

2 According to the Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, p. 68, the actual words used are:—*Sri Vira Raman Umaiyammaiy-âna Pillayâr Tiruvadi piratittai pannichch aruliya* [du]. This passage is not quite free from flaws and the meaning also is rather obscure. I think that *Umaiyammaiâna* is a mistake for *Umaiyammaiyin*, the length sign having been wrongly added to 'ya' instead of the 'i' symbol. With this correction, there are two or three different ways of interpreting the passage. Firstly, in the name "Sri Vira Raman Umaiyammai" Sri Vira Raman might be taken to refer to King Ramavarman, the immediate predecessor and uncle of the then ruler Raman Keralavarman; Umai to be the proper name of the lady and the *ammai* to denote that she was the King's wife. Of the two words 'Pillayâr' and Tiruvadi' which follows this compound name, the first might mean 'the son' and the second 'the God'. In this case, the temple (*Tiruvadi*) must have been built by a son (*pillayâr*) of the wife (*ammai*) of King Ramavarman. It might also be that *Umaiyammai* was the daughter or niece, probably the latter, of a private individual by name Vira-Raman (Vira Ramavarman) and to take Pillayâr-Tiruvadi' to mean the *Yuvaraja* and as the builder of the temple.........If Tiruvadi is to be taken with Pillayâr, as it seems likely, I think there cannot be any doubt that *Umaiyammai* was not the wife of either Ramavarman or Raman Keralavarman but was the queen, i.e., the sister of Rama Varman (shortened into Raman), for it is only then her son would-be entitled to the appellation of Tiruvadi. Quite in keeping with this view last expressed there is the word '*Sri*' prefixed to the name of the lady, though the inscription does not use the epithet *nambiratti* or *tambiratti*, which could naturally be expected in such instances. In this case, it will also be observed that the builder of the temple must have been the younger brother of King Raman Keralavarman."—Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, p. 69—(Ed).

But whoever Princess Umaiyammai was, our document proves beyond all doubt that on the morning of Thursday, about 8 P.M., the 18th Mînam 389 M.E., *i.e.*, 1214 A.D.,[1] the throne of Venad was occupied by Sri Vira Irâman Kerala Varma Tiruvaḍi. We know he was on the throne in 384. How long ago he ascended it, and when exactly it passed away to his successor, are points yet to be determined. We meet with another sovereign of Venad only in 410 M.E., and we may, therefore, provisionally take his reign to have extended to the close of the 4th Malabar century.

With the opening of the fifth century of the Kollam Era we meet with another king of Venad, by name *Sri Vira Ravi Kêraḷa Varma.* That the 28th Mêḍam 410 M.E.[2] fell within his reign is proved by a *Vatteḷuttu* inscription at *Maṇalikkarai*, a petty village near Padmanabhapuram in South Travancore. The document is found inscribed on all the four sides of a tablet specially put up in front of the Âḷvar temple in this village. The face of the tablet contains 23 lines, its obverse 32, and the two sides 37 and 17, respectively. Why the document was entered on a special tablet, and not on the walls of the temple as was the custom, it is impossible now to ascertain. Possibly its singular importance demanded this singular treatment. For if my reading of it is correct, it is nothing short of one of the great charters of Travancore. Its

---

1 "In the year opposite the Kollam year 389 " is taken as 390. "The year Kollam 390 was one in which Jupiter was in the Kumba rasi as expressed in the inscription. Further verification proves that the details work-out correct for Thursday the 12th February 1215, then all the combinations occurred as furnished in the inscription "—Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, p. 69.—Ed.

Dr. F. Kielhorn also gives this as the date of this Inscription, see Indian Antiquary, Vol. XXV, p. 54.—Ed.

2 Mr. L. D. Swamikannu Pillai notes " On Monday, 21st April A.D. 1236=Kollan 411, Jupiter's mean longitude was 234·84 degrees which between 216 (end of Tula) and 240 (end of Virchika) is correctly located in Virchika rasi. Further verification is not possible owing to want of *tithi*, *nakshatra* or week day. For instance 27 சென்ற நாள் may mean 28th day or 27th day. The day I have given above was the 28th of Mesha month."—Ed.

substance, as far as I can make out, would run thus in English:—

No. 12[1] / 91 — VATTELUTTU / OLD MALAYALAM.

Hail! Prosperity! In the year opposite the Kollam year 410, with Jupiter in Scorpio, and the Sun 27 days old in Aries (*i.e.*, the 28th Mêḍam), is issued the following Proclamation, after a consultation having been duly held, among the loyal chieftains of Sri Vîra Iravi Kêraḷa Varma Tiruvaḍi, graciously ruling Venad, the members of the *Sabha* (or Association) of Kôdainallûr, and the people of that village, as well as Kaṇḍan Tiruvikraman of Marugatachchêri, entrusted with the right of realizing the Government dues. Agreeably to the understanding arrived at in this consultation, we command and direct that the tax due from Government lands be taken as amounting in paddy to * * * * and 24, in *Arakkal*[2] crop, and 725 * and 24, in *Châral* crop, and making up per year a total of * * * * *; and the same, due from tax-paying village[3] lands, be taken as amounting in paddy to * * * * and 24, in *Arakkal* crop; and 728* and 24, in *Châral* crop, and making up per year, a total of * * 709$\frac{2}{20}$; and that when the due quantity is measured out, a receipt be granted, discharging the liability, the fact being duly marked also in the rent roll: and we command moreover that the order of permanent lease (now in force) be surrendered into the hands of the clerks who write or issue such deeds * * * * [4]. From the *Tuvâmi* (or Swâmi), too, no more shall any lease be taken. When part of the tax is paid, and part is still due, a list shall be

1 Republished in Tr. A. S., Vol. III, p. 59.—Ed.

2 *Arakkal* and *Châral* seem to have been the crops of those days; now they are called *Kanni and Kumbham*.

3 Obviously then there were lands that paid no tax to Government.

4 There are about 5 or 6 words here which carry no meaning to my mind. So also after the word 'fine' about the end of the deed.

prepared showing the arrears for the whole year; and an *Anchâli*[1] (or authorization) taken in writing to realize the same from the *Sabha* and the inhabitants; and the arrears then recovered accordingly. In seasons of drought and consequent failure of crops, the members of the *Sabha* and the people of the village shall inspect the lands, and ascertain which have failed and which have not. The lands that have failed shall be assessed at one-fifth of the normal dues, but this one-fifth shall be levied as an additional charge on the remaining lands bearing a crop. If all the taxable lands appear to have equally failed, the *Sabha* and the villagers shall report the matter to *Tuvâmi*, and after the *Tuvâmi* has inspected the lands and ascertained the fact, one-fifth (of the entire dues) shall be levied. This one-fifth shall be taken to include *Patta Viritti* and *Ôṇa Chelavu*, amounting in paddy to * *. If the members of the *Sabha* and the inhabitants agree among themselves, and pray in common for a postponement of the payment, as the only course open to a majority among them, this demand (one-fifth drought rate) shall be apportioned over all the lands paying tax to Government, (to be levied in the subsequent harvest) but without interest and *Pattâri*, the rent roll of the current year being scored out. Should anything whatever be done contrary to these rules, the deviation shall be visited with fine, * * * and the strict procedure again adopted. This our regulation shall continue in force as long as the moon and the stars endure. This is a true stone inscribed copy of the holy Royal writ.

Such is the substance of the remarkable document before us, as far as I can make it out. Containing as it does several obsolete revenue terms, I cannot vouch for the literal accuracy of every word in my rendering. One or two expressions still remain obstinate and obscure. Nevertheless, I feel sure I cannot be far wrong with the bulk of

1 I take this word conjecturally to mean some kind of authorization.

my interpretation. Nor can there by any doubt as to the unique importance of the record. Unlike the inscriptions hitherto noticed, the one before us grants, not a perpetual lamp or 'a mountain-like' drum to the gods above, but peace and protection to toiling humanity here below. One of the most momentous questions in all human communities has been, and will always be, the price each individual in it has to pay for the advantages of organized social life. In proportion to the fixity and definiteness characterizing this price, in all its aspects, is the Government of the community said to be civilized, stable, and constitutional. An important item in the price to be thus paid is the pecuniary contribution given by each individual for the maintenance of the State. In all agricultural countries, the bulk of the contribution must assume the form of land tax. In Travancore, then, which is little else than agricultural, where in fact there is no individual but has his *Tarawâḍ*, his plot of land, the plot in which he is born, in which he lives and works, and in which he dies and is cremated too, so that his very ashes stick to it even after his soul departs this world, in a country so entirely agricultural, there can be no question of more vital interest, or of more universal concern, than the nature and amount of land tax, the manner and time of paying it, and the machinery through which it is realized for the State. It appears to have been the practice with several Governments in bygone days to farm out the land revenue to the highest bidders, with a view to save themselves the trouble and expense of collecting it by drops and dribblets. The iniquity of the system may be better imagined than described. It seems, nevertheless, to have been current in the neighbouring districts of Tinnevelly and Madura, until the very days of the Honourable East India Company. But in Travancore, thanks to our village associations and the magnanimity and political sagacity that seem to have uniformly characterized the Venad sovereigns, the system, if it was ever largely introduced, was nipped in the bud, and the disasters of the fable of the goose with the golden

eggs were early averted. For, observe how the Royal writ before us deals that system a deathblow. It quietly takes away, in the first place, its sting by fixing the Government dues exactly and unalterably per year and per harvest. The lease again is not to be a '*Tîrâ Taravu*' an enduring one, but to be renewed from time to time, so that the Government farmer would have no chance of abusing his power on the strength of the hold he might otherwise have on the people. The writ provides, further, for the reduction of the Government demand to one-fifth in times of drought and failure. Why when some lands alone fail in a village, this one-fifth should be given up on those lands, but levied as an additional charge upon the remaining might demand a word of explanation. In seasons of partial failure, and in tracts of land not fully opened out by easy lines of communication, the price of corn goes easily high ; and the Kôdainallûr Council seems to have thought it just, or at all events conducive to fellow feeling, that those that are benefited by such an adventitious rise of prices should forego a portion of their profits for the sake of their suffering fellow-villagers. At any rate, the measure must have acted as a check upon false complaints of failure, since the duty of determining what lands had failed, and what not, was left to the villagers themselves under the supervision of the *Sabha.* It would be interesting to know who the *Tuvâmi* or *Swâmi* was, to whom the edict assigns the duty of ascertaining and certifying the fact, in case the whole village fails. He was, no doubt, some high ecclesiastical functionary, with a considerable portion of the land revenue of the village probably assigned to him for his own support and the support of the temples he was in charge of. The prohibition to take out leases from the *Tuvâmi* would then mean a prohibition to farm out to the highest bidder the land revenue so assigned to him. Anyhow, when the *Swâmi* certifies a complete failure of crops in the whole village, the Government reduces its total demand to one-fifth, and foregoes, in addition, its right to levy two minor charges, under the

names of *Paṭṭa Viritti,* probably a present on the anniversary of the Sovereign's accession to the throne, and *Ôṇa Chelavu*[1] a special contribution to keep up the annual national festival of that name. Deviation from the rules is forbidden under some severe penalties, the extent and nature of which, however, I am not able to discover; and the rates of assessment as well as the rules are declared unalterable as long as the moon and the stars endure. Can a *permanent* Revenue Settlement go further? Or can a more deadly blow be imagined on the farming system, which seems to have been allowed to do so much mischief, and for so long a time, in the neighbouring Tamil districts? The preamble to this remarkable Proclamation adds but a charm and a dignity of its own to the whole. It is said that the edict is issued in terms of the understanding come to in a Council composed of the loyal chieftains or ministers of the king, the association of Kôdainallûr, the people of the village, and Kaṇḍan Tiruvikraman, the local revenue farmer or collector. I call him the *collector,* for, however oppressive a lessee or farmer he might have been before the date of this document, he and his successors in office could have been nothing more than simple collectors of revenue, *after* the exact definition of the Government dues given in the edict itself. No doubt, he must have been a terrible man in his day, with an appointed function in the evolution of history, not unlike, perhaps, the one played by those who went forth to demand 'ship money' from Hampden. The good people of Kôdainallûr seem to have been also equal to the occasion. Here is proof, if need be, of the independent nature and constitution of our old Village Associations. The *Sabhas* being mentioned side by side with the people, it is impossible

---

1 *Oṇam* or *Srâvaṇam* is a star in Aquila. The national festival is called by this name, because it falls on the day the moon reaches this mansion in September. It is probably connected with the harvest, Parasurâma's yearly visit being a later fiction. Tenants do present to this day to their landlords certain agricultural products under the name of *Oṇa Kâḷcha.*

to take them as mere occasional assemblies of the inhabitants, summoned together for the time being, by those in charge of the administration. Here they appear as permanent and well-constituted Public Bodies that acted as a buffer between the people and the Government. The village or common lands, so clearly distinguished from those directly under Government, in this our present record, was in all probability everywhere under *their* management. What exactly was the service the good *Sabha* of Kôdainallûr was able to render on this occasion, or what exactly were the circumstances that brought about this memorable Council itself, we have as yet no means of knowing; but whatever they were, the whole procedure reflects the greatest credit on all the parties concerned, their conjoint action resulting in so precious a charter to the people, and so unmistakable a monument of the sovereign's unbounded love of his subjects. Though the wording of the document makes the enactment applicable primarily only to the village of Kôdainallûr, I have no doubt it was sooner or later extended to the whole of Venad. A just principle needs but once to be recognized to be applied on all hands. I hesitate not, therefore, to call this Manalikkarai Proclamation, one of the *great charters of Travancore*. Entered as it is on a detached stone, and containing as it does several expressions yet dark and obscure, it would be well to remove the original document itself and to preserve it in the Public Museum at the capital, where, I have no doubt, it will now receive better treatment than was accorded to a similar tablet from Varkkalai, which having discharged well and long the duty of a grindstone, is now so far defaced as to reveal nothing more than its ancient age and its iniquitous sufferings![1]

---

1 This is a remarkable old specimen of Vaṭṭeḷuttu inscription. It seems to be dated 79 M.E. I believe it comes from Varkkalai. It opens with a string of Sanscrit words written in old Malayalam characters in praise of the then ruling king. The body of the document is in Vaṭṭeḷuttu. But in spite of all my repeated endeavours, oil *abhishêkams* and *pûjas* without number, I have not succeeded as yet in coaxing it to reveal even a line in full, the middle of it being so completely defaced by the use to which it was put by the *Marâmut coolies*. A hundred times the cost of the mortar ground on it would not have been ill spent, if it had been spent in the preservation of this unique ancient monument. It appears to me to record an important treaty between certain parties of whom *Uyyakkoṇḍan* was surely one.

But the immediate purpose for which the Manalikkarai charter is here introduced is to prove the rule of Sri Vira Ravi Kerala Varma on the 28th Mêdam 410 M.E., or about April 1235. Having met Sri Vira Râman Kerala Varma only 21 years prior, we may take the two reigns as having been conterminous with one another. Seventeen years later still, we meet with another monarch of Venad. That the 22nd of Iḍavam 427 was a day in the reign of *Sri Vira Pudmanâbha Mârtaṇḍa Varma Tiruvaḍi* is proved by a Vaṭṭeḷuttu inscription at *Varkkalai*, a place of pilgrimage about 24 miles to the north of Trivandram. Perhaps to the pilgrim world in India, no place in Travancore is so well known as *Varkkalai* or *Janârdanam*. The geologically interesting cliffs that form the characteristic features of this promontory are obviously of much earlier formation than the alluvial soil surrounding it on all sides, and possibly the early Indian geographers used it, along with *Cape Comorin* and *Rameswaram* on the eastern coast,[1] for marking off the southern contour of their favourite *Bharata Varsha*. The mineral springs of this sacred place may be taken, perhaps, as furnishing another and more practical justification for the estimation in which it is held by foreign pilgrims. To the *Stala Purâṇa*,[2] of the place, however, the hills and the springs are as if they never existed. It delights only to relate how on one occasion the *Dêvas* performed a *yâga* sacrifice on the spot, how the Brahmins had then a feast, rich and indescribable, and how the local deity, with the object of perpetuating that feast, practised a clever and successful practical joke upon

1 It is possible that the sanctity of *Varkkalai* is partly due to its having been taken by early Indian geographers to be in the same latitude as *Ramêswaram* in the east. Later, perhaps, a closer approximation was attempted by the foundation of a temple near Quilon, under the very name of Ramêswaram. That something of the kind must have been meant is proved by such places as the following almost in the same latitude :—Alwaye and Madura, whose ancient name was Âlavây, and Trichur and Trichinopoly obviously derived from the same root, despite modern fanciful corruptions.

2 It is available only in manuscript. Its style is clearly modern.

the authors thereof! On the southern wall of the chief shrine in this spot, will be found in four lines the document I now proceed to translate :—

No. 13[1] / 48. VATTELUTTU OLD MALAYALAM.

Hail! Prosperity! In the Kollam year 427, with Jupiter entering into Aries, and the sun 21 days old in Taurus, Wednesday, the 5th lunar day after new moon, and with the sign of Cancer rising in the orient, the loyal chieftains, of Sri Vira Pudmanâbha Mârtânda Varma Tiruvadi, graciously ruling over Venad, consecrated the holy temple of Vadasêrikkarai, at Udaiya Mârtândapuram in Varkkalai, after constructing with granite stones the inner shrine from the foundations to the wall plates, and paving the courtyard with stones, besides repairing the Sri Mukha Mandapam (or the hall in front facing the shrine).

This is one of the most satisfactory Vatteluttu inscriptions with me, every word in it being clear and unmistakable. It proves that on the morning of the 22nd of Idavam 427 M E.,[2] about 9 A.M., Wednesday, the throne of Venad was enjoyed by Sri Vira Padmanâbha Mârtânda Varma Tiruvadi,[3] who in all probability immediately succeeded His Highness Sri Vira Ravi Kêrala Varma of Manalikkarai fame. It is interesting to note that the sacred spot where the temple now stands was then called Udaiyamârtândapuram, no doubt, in commemoration of an earlier builder or patron of the fane; but it cannot be the

1 Republished in Tr. A. S., IV, p. 151.

2 The 21st day of the month of Vrishaba therefore was Wednesday, the 15th May A.D. 1252 when the 5th *tithi* of the bright half ended 10th 38m. after mean sunrise and when Jupiter was in the sign Mesham which it had entered on the 17th March A. D. 1252 - Dr. F. Kielhorn in Indian Antiquary, Vol. XXV.—Ed.

3 According to the Aṟṟur copper plate inscription (dated Kollam 426) he appears to have been called also Vira Ravi Udaiyamârtânda Varman Siraivây-mâttavar of Kilapperur - Vide Tr.A.S., IV, p. 115.—Ed.

Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma of our Tiruvaṭṭar inscription, as it is not likely that the temple could have demanded repair and reconstruction in so short a time. That the chiefs of Sri Padmanâbha Mârtâṇḍa Varma were not the originators of the temple is clear enough from their having had only to repair the hall facing the shrine.

Hitherto we have had a series of sovereigns, from 301 to 427, with intervals too short to lead us to suspect their unbroken succession. But now for the first time appears an apparent blank. The next king of Venad revealed by the documents in my collection is Sri Vira Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma II, who ruled on the 22nd of Kumbham 491 M.E. There is thus an interval of 64 years —a period presumably too long to be allotted to one reign. What princes, if any, enjoyed the throne of Venad during the interval, and whether they have left any traces at all behind them, future researches alone can determine. I have about 15 documents in my present collection, dated from 400 to 491, but none of them gives me any help. On the other hand, judging by the light of these records, one would be led to conclude that this unaccounted interval of half a century was a time of trouble in the south-eastern frontiers of Venad. It is about this time that the foreign temple of Rajendra Cholisvaram at Kôṭṭar receives several grants and dedications from private parties, *primâ facie* foreign to Travancore. In the midst of these grants and presumably of the same age, so far as palæography and situation can tell us, occur four inscriptions dated in the 11th year of *Sri Sundara Chôla Pâṇḍya Dêva, alias Kôchchaḍaiya Varma.* In an inscription at Suchîndram, dated the 9th year of the same Pandya Deva, this ancient village is itself called 'Sundara Chôla Chatur Vêdi Mangalam.' Finally in *Saka* 1293 or 546 of our Malabar Era, this same foreign temple of Rajendra Chola receives substantial repairs in the hands of Parâkrama Pâṇḍya Dêva. What could all this mean but that South Travancore was once more, about this period, under foreign sway? It

looks highly probable that Sri Sundara Chola Pâṇḍya Dêva of the inscriptions we have just noticed, was the same as Sundara Pandya Jaṭhâ Varma, whose accession[1] is calculated by Shankar Dikshit of Dhulia, from materials furnished by Dr. Hultzsch, to have taken place in *Saka* year 1172, and whose ninth year of reign in consequence would be *Saka* 1181, or 534 M.E., *i.e.*, exactly seven years after the chieftains of our Vira Padmanâbha Mârtâṇḍa Varma completed their reconstruction of the temple at Varkkalai. Probably, then, soon after the completion of that architectural undertaking in the north, Sri Vira Padmanâbha Mârtâṇḍa Varma must have been called upon to do more anxious duties in the south. The cloud must have been gathering in that horizon even much earlier. I find the foreign temple of Rajendra Cholisvaram rising into favour from 392 M.E. The contest might have been long kept up, but the result could not have been other than unfavourable. Sundara Chola Pâṇḍya Dêva succeeded at last in wresting the whole of the district of which Kôṭṭâr was the centre. He seems to have established also his authority so widely and well as to lead private parties to reckon their grants in the year of his reign, and to call an ancient hamlet like Suchîndram, by a new fangled name, coined specially to flatter his pride. Sundara Chola Pandya Kôchchaiḍya Varma was by no means the last of the revived dynasty of Pandyas to trouble Travancore. I have with me an inscription dated the 3rd year of Uḍaiyar Sri Chola Pandya Deva Kôchchaḍaiya Varma, another dated the 2nd year of a simple Kôchchaḍaiya Varma, probably the same as the last; two again dated in the reign of Vikrama Chôḷa Pâṇḍya Dêva Mâra Varma, and two more in the reign of Sri Vallabha Dêva Mâra Varma These and other important records of foreign sovereigns in Travancore, I shall, with your permission, place before you in the course of another lecture. I refer to them here only in the way of showing that, pending further researches, we may, for the

---

1 *Vide* page 221 of *The Indian Antiquary* for August 1893.

present, reasonably assume that the *hiatus* of 60 years, of which we have now no account to give, was a period too full of trials and tribulations to allow occasions for such acts of charities and temple buildings as form the subject matter of our inscriptions in general.

But before the century we are now in did end, the Pâṇḍyan wave of conquest must have receded for a while; for we get once more a glimpse of our beloved Venad throne in 491 M.E. On the 22nd of Kumbham of that year, that throne was occupied by Sri Vira Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma II, *alias* Vira Pâṇḍya Dêva My authority for the statement is an inscription in five lines on the southern wall of a temple at Kêraḷapuram about three miles from Padmanâbhapuram. It would read thus, if translated :—

No. 14[1]/69.

VATTELUTTU
OLD MALAYALAM.

In the Kollam year 491, and in the 4th year, the sun being 21 days old in Acquarius, is made the following grant. The loyal chieftains of Sri Vîra Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma Tiruvaḍiyâr, Vîra Pâṇḍya Dêvar, graciously ruling over Venad, do hereby provide in writing for a holy *Nanda* lamp and for the daily expenses of the Mahâdêva of Sri Vira Kêraḷêsvaram, at Muttalaikkuruchchi, in Pâlkôḍu Dêsam, in Division No. 1 of the district of Chenkaḷunîrnâḍu, in Tennâḍu, belonging to (or under the administration of) the said chieftains. Accordingly, the said chieftains make over (for the said purpose) all the dues taken as *Kaḻiyakkam*, from this *Dêsam* (or circle), including *Ottira* tax, *Uvvi*, bamboo grain, *Aḷagerutu*, duty on looms and palmyras, *Karaipparṟu*, fines and *Kô-muṟaippâḍu*. In this manner then, the said chieftains grant in writing, all the dues taken as *Kaḻiyakkam* from this *Dêsam* (or circle), including *Ottira* tax, *Uvvi*, bamboo grain, *Aḷagerutu*, duty on looms and palmyras, *Karaipparṟu*, fines, and *Kô-muṟaippâḍu*, excepting such of them as have been already granted to meet the

1 This was republished in Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, page 89.

charges of the Mahâdêva of Tiruvitânkôḍu[1] and the Dêva and Bhagavati of Pâkkôḍu, to be made use of as long as the moon and the stars endure, for the purpose of supplying the daily needs of the Mahâdêva of Kêraḷêsvaram, and a holy *Nanda* lamp to the same deity, which fact we the following do know and can attest :—Châttan Maṇiyan of Tâlkkil Pulavaramaṇ, Nârâyaṇan Kuḍîsan of Penankâḍu, Kaṇḍan Iravi Varman (signature)** Tiruvikraman of Punalûri (signature). This deed in *cadjan* is written with the knowledge of the above persons by Irâman Kêraḷan of Kaitavây (signature).

Thus then on the 22nd Kumbham 491 M.E., or roughly speaking about the end of February 1316,[2] the sovereign of Venad was Sri Vîra Udaiya Mârtaṇḍa Varma, who, it will be observed, styled himself further Vîra Pâṇḍya Dêva. Nothing can be of greater historical interest than to know the circumstances that led to the assumption of this new and foreign title; but I have succeeded as yet in finding no clue whatever towards its solution.[3] May it

1 The word Travancore is a corruption of Tiruvitânkôḍu. But I am not at all sure *Tiruvitânkôḍu* is analysable into *Sri Vâḷum Kôdu*, as is now so generally assumed. The derivation owes its plausibility to the corrupt form of *Tiruvânkôḍu.*

2 According to Dr. R. Schram 15th Feb. 1316 or 14th Feb. 1317.

3 " In the subjoined record the word Vira Pâṇḍyadêvarkku is entered immediately after Vira Udaiyamârtâṇḍa Varma Tiruvaḍiyâr, the proper name of the Venadu king and seems to form part of it. Though it is rather unnatural to expect this method of mentioning names or surnames, yet the passage as it runs, admits of no other reading. The only way of dissociating Vira Pandyadevarkku is to separate it from Vira Udaiyamartanda Varma Tiruvadiyar and to take it with what comes after it, viz., '*aminda adhikarar*'. In this case Vira Udaiyamartanda Varma Tiruvadiyar which is in the nominative case would have no predicate. It being therefore certain that Vira Pandya was part of the name of the Venad king Vira Udaiyamartanda Tiruvadi, we have perhaps to assume that it was adopted to show who his overlord was just as in the case of his immediate predecessor Ravivarma Sangramadhira, the name Kulasekhara was added to indicate that king held a subordinate position under Maravarman Kulasekhara I..... The Pandya contemporary of Vira Udaiyamartanda Varma Tiruvadi was Vira Pandya .. . who was actually crowned in A.D. 1310 and continued to rule till A.D. 1342. Since we know that Maravarman Kulasekhara I reigned from A.D. 1268 to 1310 he was a contemporary of Ravivarma Sangramadhira who assumed the name of Kulasekhara as part of his own"—Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, p. 90—Ed.

be that when the Pâṇḍya power shrunk back to its original condition, after having been blown out into dangerous and meddlesome greatness by the breath of a Kôchchaḍaiyan or a Kômâran, the Venad kings not only regained their lost ground, but also retaliated by invading and conquering a portion of the dominions of their recent conquerors, and assumed, too, their style and manners to legitimize their hold upon the territories so added to their own? [1] Agreeably to this foreign title, we find also the no less foreign method of dating the inscription in the year of the sovereign's reign. But thanks to the wisdom of the Venad chiefs, this new method was not allowed to supersede, but was only combined with, the old and sensible way of reckoning in the fixed Kollam Era. In the case before us, therefore, the mention of the year of the king's reign, instead of giving rise to endless collations and calculations, as is so usual in Indian Epigraphy, only gives us the additional welcome information that Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma ascended the throne three years previously, *i e.*, in 488 M.E. It is quite possible that the reference is made not to the year of the accession, but to the date of his assuming the foreign title of Vîra Pâṇḍya Dêva. In either case, we are sure that the reigning sovereign of Venad on the 22nd of Kumbham 491

---

1 " It is worth remembering that Mara Varman Kulasekhara I soon after he appointed his illegitimate son Vira Pandya as his successor was killed by his legitimate son Sundara-Pandya in A.D. 1310. Vira-Pandya proving himself too powerful, the parricide Sundara was forced to seek the help of Muhammadans. When the later advanced against Madura in 1311 that place was evacuated by Vira Pandya... ..Taking advantage of these events Ravivarma Sangramadhira appears to have pushed his arms as far north as Conjeevaram, conquering Vira Pandya, subjugating the Pandya and Chola territories and crowning himself on the banks of the Vegavati in Coonjeevaram in A.D 1313." It looks as if Ravivarman did not continue long after his cornation; since we are told by this record that Vira Udaiyamartanda Varma became the king of Venadu, in A.D. 1313. It is not unlikely that Venad kings then retained possession of some parts of Tinnevelly for sometime to come, vide Tr. A. S., IV,—Ed.

(March 1316) was Sri Vira Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma Tiruvaḍi. Having already met a king of this name, we shall call him Sri Vira Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma II, or as styled in the document before us, Vîra Pâṇḍya Dêva.

As for the particulars of the grant, I am at a loss to understand the nature of all the taxes set apart by this document for the use of the Mahâdêva. Most of the terms used are unknown to literature and lexicons, and as far as I am aware, they are obsolete also in the current revenue system of the land. Neither *Kaḻiyakkam* nor *Ottira*[1] carries any meaning to my mind. *Uvvi*, according to Winslow, may mean 'Head'; but what sort of tax was called by this rare word for head is now impossible to conjecture. '*Bamboo grain*' is still of some use to Hill-men, and probably it stood, in those days of little or no forest conservancy, as the type of hill products, which in Travancore now includes besides timber, ivory, bees wax, &c. *Aḻagerutu* is a term we have already met with and despaired of. Literally it may mean a 'fair bull.' To the known tax on hand-looms, we find here attached a tax on the palmyra, and it looks probable that what is meant is a tax for tapping, and not otherwise using that palm. Besides fines, the Government of those days, it would appear, appropriated certain payments under the name of *Kô-murai*[2] *Pâḍu*, literally 'Royal-justice-income,' which we might take to represent the court fees and 'Judicial revenue' of modern times. *Karaippaṟṟu* means adhering to or reaching land, and it might be taken to include treasure troves, mines, jetsams and floatsams

---

1 *Ottir-Kadamai* whose significance has not been ascertained may be the same as *Ottachchu* perhaps the fee paid by the brick layer—Tr. A. S.—Ed.

2 This word is read as *Kol murai padu* in Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, p. 92. He says 'the reading is clearly *Kol* and not *Ko*, it may be rendered as the 'dues customarily received'.—Ed.

and all such royalties known to law.[1] It would be interesting indeed to know how, at what rates, and through what agencies, these several taxes were levied, and what exactly was the bearing of the change with respect to both people and Government, when the revenue was assigned away, as in the present instance, for the maintenance of a particular temple. One would think from the minute political divisions and subdivisions noticed in this document that the administration of the revenue was far from crude or primitive. We know already that Venad was primarily divided into 18 Provinces or Nâḍus, and probably Tennâḍu, or Southern Province, was one of these primary divisions. That the part of the country about Padmanâbhapuram should be called the southern province, while the one still further to the south is named *Nânchil Nâḍu*, may be significant of the extent of the Venad Principality at one stage of its history. The loose and redundant style of the document speaks badly of the literary capacities of the hereditary clerk of the crown, Kaitavây Irâman Kêraḷan,—whose family name Kaitavây occurs so frequently in the royal grants in our collection,— unless, indeed, it is taken to indicate the hurried occasion of the grant itself, such as the flush of a signal triumph, or sudden recovery from a serious malady. The absence of the usual expression 'Hail! Prosperity!' at the commencement, and that of the 'Sign Manual' at the end are omissions equally worthy of attention. What they signify, if anything at all, we have no data to determine. That only two of the four ministers or chieftains that arrange for the grant sign their names may to some extent be taken as an indication of the state of education at the time.

The next record with me will take us beyond the fifth Malabar century, and therefore beyond the scope of

---

1 It is not unlikely that it simply means what is received on dry lands (*Karai*) like *Kadamai pattam irai* etc., the word *parru* denotes 'a share' or 'receipt' and *Karai* means 'dry lands bordering on fields,' as such *Karai parru* must mean income from dry lands adjoining wet lands—Tr. A. S.—Ed.

the permission I have taken from you this time to address you. Of the many themes of historical interest calling for investigation all around us here in Travancore, we selected its ancient Royal House, that beloved Royal House to which we are all so devoted, as the one most naturally and rightfully claiming our first and foremost attention. Limiting ourselves then to a particular period in the history of that house, viz., the 4th and 5th Malabar centuries, of which no account *of whatever description* was forthcoming, and availing ourselves of *but one* of the means of historical researches, the safest and the best in fact, *viz.*, public stone inscriptions, we endeavoured to find whether there were no rays of light to dispel the desperate darkness in which the epoch was allowed hitherto to stand enveloped. Even putting aside all side lights and inferences as to the general condition of the country, its society, its economy, its internal government, we have now the following solid facts to offer :—

I. Sri Vîra Kêraḷa Varma ruled Venad in 301 and 319 M.E.

II. Sri Vira Ravi Varma ruled Venad in 336 and 342 M.E.

III. Sri Vira Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma, in 348 M.E.

IV. Sri Âditya Râma Varma ruled Venad in 365 M.E.

V. Sri Vira Râma Varma ruled Venad in 371 M.E.

VI. Sri Vira Râman Kêraḷa Varma, in 384 and 389 M.E.

VII. Sri Vira Ravi Kêraḷa Varma ruled Venad in 410 M.E.

VIII. Sri Vira Padmanâbha Mârtâṇḍa Varma, in 427 M.E.

IX. Sri Udaiya Mârtâṇḍa Varma II *alias* Vira Pâṇḍya Dêva ruled Venad in 491 M.E.

It will be observed, in this list of the early sovereigns of Travancore, whose names and dates the inscriptions have now laid before you have served to bring to light, I have not included the doubtful case of Sri Vîra Kêraḷa

Varma II. of the Âṟṟingal fragments, or of Kôda Mârtâṇḍa, who seems to have taken part in the institution of the Kollam Era in 824 A.D. Reject these two names, and reject also, if you please, every word of my inferences and surmises, and yet you will have, *for the first time revealed to you,* the names and dates of *nine* of the old and revered sovereigns of Venad.[1] That these names and dates by themselves will not constitute the history of the two centuries we took up for our study, needs no saying. But that they will stand in good stead when the history of the epoch comes to be written is my humble hope and trust.

---

1 The Travancore Archæological Department in its report for the year 1099 M.E. (1924 – 25) publishes a list of sovereigns of Travancore for this period. It is as follows :—

1 Vira Kerala Varman, 319 M.E.

2 Kodai Kerala Varman 320-26 M.E.

3 Vira Ravi Varman 336 M.E.

4 Vira Udaiya Martanda Varman *alias* Kodai Martanda Varman } 359—364 M.E. or 364—371 M.E.

5 Vira Rama Varman Tiruvadi 371-372 M.E.

6 Vira Rama Kerala Varman *alias* Vira Devadaren Kerala Varman } 384 – 390 M.E.

7 Vira Ravi Kerala Varma *alias* Vira Kerala Varma Tiruvadi } 392—412 M.E.

8 Vira Ravi Udaya Martanda Varman Tiruvadi—427 M.E.

9 Ravi Varma Kulasekhara 474 M.E.

10 Vira Udaya Martanda Varma Tiruvadi II 487—491 M.E.

It is evident from this list, that later researches have only proved the conclusions arrived at by the author in this first attempt.—Ed.

SOME SOVEREIGNS OF TRAVANCORE IN THE SIXTH CENTURY M.E.*

In the previous chapter, I noticed a series of dated inscriptions enabling us to infer, among other matters of historical importance, the names of the sovereigns who ruled over Travancore, or, as it was then called, Venad, in apparently unbroken succession from 301 of the Kollam era to 427. I also adduced some reasons for suspecting that for upwards of half a century subsequent to that date, Venad was more or less in a state of confusion, probably in consequence of foreign aggression and annoyance. But the last document which I brought to notice proved that the confusion, whatever its cause, was of a temporary description, and that by 491 the ancient principality had regained her authority and was once more pursuing her even course of progress under *Sri-Vîra-Udaya Mârtaṇḍa Varman* II *alias Vira-Pâṇḍyadêva.* As there was reason to infer from the same document that this prince had begun his rule only four years previously, we may safely presume that his reign saw the close of the fifth Malabar century.

I propose now to discuss some later documents relating to the same royal house. I regret that the records I possess are not such as to give a continuous account of the period over which they extend. Most of them have been in my hands for more than three years, and I have waited thus long before attempting to give an interpretation of them in the hope that I should be able to fill up the gaps in them, or at least to piece them together so as to throw light on a tolerably large portion of the period to which they refer. But I have not succeeded to the extent of my desire. Still, however disconnected and fragmentary these records may be, they constitute the only reliable data yet available for the future historian of the land.

---

* This was published in the Indian Antiquary (July 1896), Vol. XXV, p. 184.

The first of the documents I have, relating to the royal family of Travancore subsequent to 500 M.E., is a Sanscrit distich, inscribed on the northern wall of the *Gôsala Krishna* Temple at Trivandram, which, for the reasons given (*ante*, page 30) we may presume to be the oldest of the shrines in this town, with the exception of those at Mitrânandapuram. When freely rendered into English the Sloka runs as follows :—

No. 15[1] / 52. — OLD MALAYALAM / SANSCRIT

First Trivandram Inscription of Âdityavarman

"Hail! Prosperity! Ho! In the year Chôḷapriya, when Jupiter was in the sign Leo, King Sarvâṅganâtha of fair reputation, moved by piety and devotion, and desirous of fame and (the merit of) charity, constructed in the town of Syânandûrapura the Gôsâla temple, the fair lamp-house, and the maṇḍapa (in front) of the Shrine of Krishna".

In this inscription, Syânandûrapura is the term used to designate the town of Trivandram. It will be remembered that in the inscription[2] of 365 M.E., the word Syânandûra was found good enough for the purpose. Why the name is now lengthened out by the addition of the unmistakable Sanscrit word *pura* I cannot say, though it is not unreasonable to suspect that the motive may have been to secure additional sanctity to the village by giving its name a clearly classical air.

Having already met with the temple of Krishna in 365 M.E., when Âditya-Râma presented to the god a 'mountain-like' drum, we have to take the Gôsâla, here said to have been constructed, as referring only to the outer rectangular hall, in the middle of which now stands the real

---

1 This was republished in Ep. Ind. Vol. IV, p. 203, by Dr. Kielhorn; and in the Tr. A. S., Vol. I, p. 171, by Mr. T. A. Gopinatha Rao.

2 *Ante* page 31.

inner shrine. Architecturally, too, this hall bears evidence of a later origin. Probably it was put up in this rectangular form, which is rather unusual in the sacred architecture of Southern India, to suit the original name of the temple, Gôsâla, which means literally 'a cowshed.'

The 'fair lamp-house' referred to can be nothing else than the wooden railings with small iron lamps that now surround the rectangular structure. It is even now regarded in the country as a specially meritorious act to provide an illumination thus round a temple, when the village folks turn out in their holiday garments to amuse themselves with innocent games and pastimes till midnight arrives, when the local beauties, lamp in hand, begin to move in procession thrice round the temple, while the brave and the sturdy, standing apart, shout 'Haiyu!' at the top of their voices, in the hope of frightening away sickness, famine, and devils! There is no evidence to show that they succeed thus in frightening away pestilence or famine; but over the last mentioned source of evil they sometimes completely triumph. For on certain occasions, as the procession goes on, a weak-minded village woman suddenly stops and shivers, and the devil possessing her poor soul, his ears thus assailed by the yell which proves too much even for his infernal tympanum, solemnly promises to surrender his prey then and there! Such illuminations and '*ârppu*,' as the hideous howling is technically called, must have become about the time of the inscription frequent enough in the rising village of Trivandram to require the provision of a permanent lamp-house.

The *maṇḍapa* spoken of is also still in existence, and the wood carvings on the ceiling and the pillars are really admirable in their way. The carved figures are meant to illustrate some of the leading events narrated in the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, and are entitled to better care than they appear to be receiving in an age when the art of carving may be said to be rapidly on the decline.

But we are here more concerned with King Sarvâṇga-nâtha than with his wood carvings, however exquisite. Evidently, the name Sarvâṇganâtha is more a descriptive title than an individual appellation. It occurs more than once in the worn out inscription on the conspicuously high altar or *bali-pitha* in front of the shrine further to the east of the *maṇḍapa.* Exposed as this altar is to the sun and rains, it is no wonder that of the inscriptions with which it is literally covered, nothing more is now decipherable. As it is in a prominent situation and within easy reach, I would recommend these inscriptions on the altar to such as may be curious to see and know for themselves, the condition to which most of these valuable historical records on the West Coast of India have been reduced through exposure. But I should add that if anyone should at the same time feel tempted to try his skill at deciphering, he ought to be prepared for similar exposure ; for between twelve and two in the day is the only time suited in this case for leisurely inspection, and umbrellas are objectionable appendages within the precincts of all Malabar temples. In this particular case, a decipherer would have also to take care that the day he selected for his visit did not synchronize with one on which a certain pious individual among the temple guards is on duty. But with all precautions, I doubt whether anyone would make out anything more from those obliterated engravings than the word Sarvânganâtha, which, as I have already said, occurs more than once among them. The word literally means 'master of all the constituents of a kingdom,' which under the name of *dasânga* are usually enumerated thus :—mountain, river, arable land, towns, garlands, horses, elephants, drums, banners, and sceptre, making ten in all. The allusion might be also to the twenty-one insignia or marks of royalty which are counted as essential before one is crowned king. These are according to Tamil lexicons the following :—crown, umbrella, hair-fans, elephant hook, drums, the discus weapon, elephants, banners, fortress, festoons, pots full of water, conches, seas, the sword-fish, garlands, turtles, a pair

of carp-fish, lions, lamps, bulls, and a throne. Why this particular king came to be noted for the complete possession of all these marks of ancient Hindu royalty it is now impossible to say. Perhaps the occurrence of a fortress in the latter list might suggest that after the bitter experience of the previous century, the Venad Kings found it desirable to protect their kingdom by fortifying some of their rising towns. Mr. Shangoonny Menon (p. 93) writes: "Sri-Vîra-Râma-Mârtâṇḍavarman, who was then in his 28th year, was installed on the *masnad* in 510 M.E. This king reconstructed the palace near the pagoda at Trivandram and built a fort round it." If we could be sure of this architectural activity, our conjecture would receive some sort of confirmation; but it is impossible to be positive about the facts stated. There would appear to have been in this early century no regular palace in Trivandram, the site now occupied by the palace being known, even in the extant old land records, as Pulluvilâgam

But whatever may have been the circumstances that led to the king's assuming the title of Sarvâṇganâtha, there can be no question as to the date of this inscription. Chôḷapriya signifies, in the Kaṭapayâdi system, the number 1296, and the word "abda" usually refers to the Sakâbda, or the Saka year. Sarvâṇganâtha then constructed the beautiful *Maṇḍapa* in front of the temple of Krishna, as well as the rectangular enclosure called *Gôsâla*, in the Saka year 1296, corresponding to the Kollam year 550 or A.D. 1374.[1] It is rather remarkable that this first mention of the Saka year in the Travancore inscriptions should be by a word which signifies also 'dear to the Cholas'—it being known that with the Pandyas and the Cheras the Kollam year was the more favoured one. If Mr. Shangoonny Menon be correct, then in his account of this early period, Sarvânganâtha might be taken as a surname either of Sri-Vira-Rama-Mârtâṇḍavarman, who according to this writer ruled

1 Dr. Kielhorn believes that the exact date of the record must have fallen between 10th Oct. 1374, and the 26th March 1375 A.D. (Ed.)

over Travancore from 510 to 550, or of his successor Ravi-varman, who died in 557.

But another inscription belonging to the same shrine leads us to a different conclusion. It consists of five Sanscrit *slokas* engraved on the basement wall of the very *maṇḍapa*, the construction of which is here recorded as having taken place in Saka 1296. The slokas might be rendered thus:—

No. 16[1] / 54	OLD MALAYALAM / SANSCRIT

Second Trivandram Inscription of Âdityavarman.

"Hail! Prosperity! Âdityavarman, the brave among the brave, is he who has erected the *Gôsâla*, Krishna's shrine, and the *maṇḍapa*, for the use respectively of cattle, the God Krishna, and the gods of the earth (viz. Brahmans). Lo! there stand visible to all, the *Gôsala*, the *maṇḍapa*, and the temple of Krishna; O dear friend! what else shall I say! May all behold with admiration these three works executed by king Âdityavarman, and worship Krishna with devotion. The pictures (*i.e* the wood carvings) that adorn the ornamental *maṇḍapa* in front of Krishna are such as attract and delight the eyes of all spectators. Stand, therefore, around this delightful *maṇḍapa*, and gaze on those pictures so gratifying to the eyes!"

These ecstatic lines no doubt represent the feelings with which the author, along with the simpler folks of his times, beheld the elegant carvings on the *Maṇḍapa*, as they stood fresh from the chisels of the carpenter. We wish, however, he had been somewhat more calm in his enjoyment; for then he could have embodied in these five slôkas, so laboriously incised into the stones, far more useful facts of history than his own aesthetic impressions and rhapsodic exhortations. For instance, he could have for one thing told us the date of these works, about which we should be left utterly in the dark but for the inscription we have just explained. If chronology was not in his line, he could have

1 This inscription is republished in Tr. A. S., Vol. I, p. 172.

at least utilized the words he so lavishly wastes, to recite the glories of his sovereign, Âdityavarman, in the fashion of the Chola inscriptions, affording thereby some scope for further historical investigations. But the most unpardonable of his offences, from our point of view, is his omission to insert somewhere in his five slokas the title Sarvâṅganâtha of his sovereign. For then we could have been certain that 'Sarvaṅganatha' of the previous record and Âdityavarman of the present are but names of one and the same king of Venad. In the face, however, of the substantial agreement between the two documents, there can be little question as to the truth of the identification. No doubt, the more imaginative of the two instruments substitutes in place of the 'fair lamp-house' the inner shrine of Krishna itself, which, however, could not have been constructed along with the *maṇḍapa* in which it is inscribed, since we know that it was in existence as early as 363 M E. The word *navatva* used in this inscription signifies usually only 'renewal', and may be so taken to apply to that inner shrine, which probably was touched up and repaired when the adjacent new works, the *Maṇḍapa*, and the rectangular enclosure, with the railings for lamp posts, were completed. I have no hesitation, therefore, in inferring that in 550 Venad was governed by Âdityavarman surnamed Sarvaṅganâtha.[1] In view of this extremely probable conclusion, Mr. Shangoonny Menon's statements would seem to require modification. Either Sri Vîra Râma Martaṇḍavarman did not live till 550, or Ravivarman was not his immediate successor. Mr. Shangoonny Menon indeed (p. 93) mentions an Âdityavarman with whom in truth his chronology begins; but he is indefinitely said to have reigned in the fifth century M.E., to have adopted two females from Kôlathnâḍ on the other side of Calicut, and to have extended his sovereignty to Vycome in 505, statements that do not look at first sight probable in themselves, parti-

1 In an inscriptiou engraved on the north and east bases of the *Mandapa* in front of the Krishnaswami temple at Vadaseri it is recorded that Adityavarman had the title Sarvanganatha. See Tr. A. S., Vol. I, p. 181—(Ed.)

cularly by the side of our inscription of 491. At any rate, they require further examination and verification. Meantime we may conclude with the help of the records now before us, that in 550 the throne of Venad was occupied neither by Vira-Rama-Mârtâṇḍavarman nor by Ravivarman, but by Âdityavarman, the Sarvâṅganâtha.

Our next inscription comes from a different quarter. It is engraved on four sides of a tablet posted in front of a temple, now said to be sacred to Âḷvâr, about three miles to the south of Padmanabhapuram in South Travancore. It consists of two parts—a Sanscrit *Sloka* and a prose record in Tamil. The part in verse may be thus translated:—

No. 17/72. — Old Tamil Grantha / Sanscrit

First Padmanabhapuram Inscription of Virakerala Martâṇḍavarman.

"In the Saka year Sákhâlôka, when the sun was in his own house, the chief of the gods in Sagittarius, and the moon in the constellation Yamya, the prosperous ruler, Martâṇḍa Varman, of boundless fame and mild disposition, the chief among the kings of Kerala, instituted, granting lands of great value for the purpose, regular offerings at daybreak for the god Sambhu of the temple of Sivagiri"

This rather cleverly composed couplet is certainly more satisfactory than those of the temple of Krishna. The chronogram Sâkhôḷâka according to the Kaṭapayâdi system of notation means the year 1325, and the Saka era being specially mentioned, there can be no doubt that the date recorded corresponds to the Malabar year 578 (A.D. 1402). The sun being said to be in his own house, current astrology would lead us to infer that the month was Chingam or Simha, the sign Leo being the one now believed by astrologers to be peculiarly the sun's own constellation. But as we shall see presently, the Tamil portion of the inscription specifies the month as Mesham. This must be due either to

an alteration in astrological conventions since 578 M.E., or to an error on the part of the composer of the Sanscrit distich, who mistook the heavenly position where the sun is reckoned to be at the zenith of his glory for the sign specially considered to be his own—a pardonable error, no doubt, on the part of one not acquainted with the intricacies of astrological conceptions. For what is more natural than to suppose that one would be at the height of one's power in one's own house rather than under the roof of another? But such a supposition would imply ignorance of an important branch of Indian letters, not only on the part of the writer of the *slôka*, but also on the part of those court pandits and other scholars of the age, who must have examined the verse before allowing it to be inscribed on a tablet specially prepared for it. The two alternatives being thus equally difficult to accept, I leave the solution of the problem to those better versed than myself in the history of Indian astrology. There can be, however, no similar doubt as to the position of the chief of the gods—Jupiter. He was in 578 in the sign of Sagittarius,—just the position where we should have expected him, having found him 28 years previously in Leo. The lunar mansion of the day was Yamya or Bharani as the star is now more commonly called.

More important to us than all these items of astronomical information is that the king of Venad of the day was Martâṇḍavarman, who is described as of boundless fame and of mild disposition, the latter of which descriptions at least must be taken as answering to fact. If the third descriptive clause, "the chief among the kings of Kerala," is meant to be equally significant, it would clearly prove that there were others in Kerala exercising sovereign powers at the time—a supposition of some historical value, as we shall see further on But it appears to me quite possible that the expression is a mere expletive introduced to fill up the metre. The subject of the grant is described as lands of great value, and its object a particular divine

service consisting of offerings to be made at the early dawn of each day.

This inference is fully borne out by the Tamil portion of the record, which when translated reads thus : —

No. $\frac{18}{72}$ OLD MALAYALAM / MEDIAEVAL TAMIL

Second Padmanabhapuram Inscription of Vira Kêrala Mârtâṇḍavarman.

" In the Kollam year 578, the sun being 26 days old in Mesham, on Saturday, new moon, (the Lunar mansion being) Bharani, was instituted a dawn offering by Sri Vira Kêrala Martâṇḍavarma Tiruvadi of Kîḷappêrûr, to be made to the Mahâdêva of Sivagiri at Ranasimhanallûr, and the arrangements made for the expenses thereof are as follow :—

" The husked paddy required per day being in home measure......the total paddy required per year is 24 *kalam*, and the cost of condiments amounts to......To meet this total charge, six *kalams* are to be taken out of the tax due on......and for the remaining 18 *kalam* is to be utilised the tax due on the paddy lands beginning with the piece called Akkirappullan Perai among the Âlvâr temple lands in Tiruvikramapuram, thus making the total 24 *kalam* in all. The clarified butter required for the divine service and for *vaisvadêva* being per month two *nâli* in home measure, the land called Mạvaraimûlaippirayiḍam is also made over for the purpose. All these properties shall be taken possession of and enjoyed by the Vâriyan of Sâttanûr, by name Âdityan Âdityan, and he shall furnish the supplies for the offering and also a holy garland out of the flower garden to be formed by him. (In return for his labour) he shall take the offering of cooked rice. If the supply is not made for any one day when the property is enjoyed in pursuance of this arrangement, double the default shall be paid ; but if the failure continues for a month, a fine shall, in addition to double the quantity defaulted, be imposed. If, however, the failure is due to the obstruction of any in the *sabhâ*, a

complaint shall be lodged at the door (of the temple ?) and the obstruction shall then be removed. Thus in lineal succession, and as long as the moon and the stars endure, shall these paddy lands and garden be enjoyed, the rent recovered every harvest, and the divine service conducted without failure. This copy of the royal writ is inscribed on this stone by Ichuran Iravi of the temple."

Thus it will be seen that this Tamil portion of the inscription adds a few particulars to those found in the Sanscrit verse above cited. A fracture having occurred on the lower right-hand corner of the front part of the tablet, a few words of the Royal writ are irrecoverably lost. But fortunately these words happen only to be those describing the lands from which the smaller portion of the supply, viz. six *kalam* of paddy, is to be drawn. It will be noticed that even as late as 578, the measure used was called *kalam* and not *kôttai*, *marakkâl*, or *parai*, as at present. The word *perai* occurs as a part of the name of a particular piece of land, and it seems to me that the underivable modern term *parai*, used in Trivandram and North Travancore both as land and paddy measure, might be traced to *perai* and therefore to *peru*, meaning 'to contain,' 'to be worth,' or 'to multiply.' I have rendered the *illaḷavu* as 'home measure,' and if I am right in my interpretation it will imply that some foreign measure was also then current in the country. The word *vaisvadêva* usually means certain offerings to departed forefathers, and since clarified butter alone is provided for, we have to take the offerings as having been of the nature of a sacrificial fire. As in our former documents, so in this we find reference made to the village councils of those days, which, it would appear, had influence and independence enough to obstruct the provisions of a royal charter. In the case of such obstruction, however, provision was made for an appeal to be taken to the 'door', which we may take to be the door[1] of the temple, and, therefore, to the Govern-

1 Till recently the official term for a revenue district was *maṇḍapattum vadukkal*, meaning the door of the *mandapa*. This Malayalam word is fast giving way to the Hindustani term *taluq*.

ment authorities connected with the temple. The curious caste name Vâriyan occurs in this inscription, and the attempts made to explain the term are so typical of the spirit of myth-making, so characteristic of Eastern scholarship, that I am tempted to borrow a passage on the subject from the pages[1] of the last Census Report of Travancore :—

"Sri-Parasurama," so runs the paragraph on The Origin and Caste Derivation of Variyars, "having brought in Brahmans from outside to colonize Malabar, detailed the Sudras to do menial services for them. The Brahmans finding the Sudras unfit from a religious point of view for pagoda service, they prayed to Parasurama to help them in their difficulty. Sri Parasurama appeared unto them and created out of water a new caste for pagoda service. They were called Vârijanmar (from the root *vâri*—water), which gradually became Vâriyanmâr". Thus in the attempt to trace a clear Dravidian word to a Sanscrit root, the special creation hypothesis is strained to breaking point. But the derivation, however gratifying to the Sanscrit grammarian, does not satisfy the Namburi philosopher, as it leaves unsettled the water-made Variyar's position in the Aryan hierarchy. A new tradition is therefore invented, and the paragraph goes on to add :—"There is also another tradition current about their origin, according to which a certain Sudra woman was doing menial service in the pagoda. She was ordered by the Brahmans employed in the temple to sweep away the bones, etc., that lay within the precincts of the pagoda. She did so, in consequence of which her caste people excommunicated her from their order. But the Brahmans allowed her to remain in the pagoda service separate from her own caste people. She and her descendants were permitted to live on terms of *sambandha* with Brahmans, thus constituting them into a separate caste, and forbidding them to interdine with Sudras. According to the ordinances of Yajnavalkya, the offspring of a mixed connection of a Brahman with a Sudra woman were termed

1 See page 746,

Vâriyars". Thus, then, does the Namburi seek to check the undue aspirations of his cleanly Variyar colleagues in the temple, by assigning to them a Sudraic origin. But the Variyars themselves are not wanting in inventive genius, and so the paragraph concludes with yet another tradition of their origin. "According to the *Bhûgôlapurana*", continues the Report, "there lived in Trichur a certain old Namburi Brahman married to a young Brahman girl. Wishing for progeny she commenced a course of devotion to the village god, one portion of which was the making of garlands of flowers daily for the god. This is considered one of the modes of propitiating a Hindu god, who heard her prayer, and she in due course conceived. Her old husband, however, suspected her of infidelity and discarded her. From that day forward the pagoda authorities also refused to accept the garlands of flowers she used to make for the deity. She was, however, resolute in her pious work, and placed the garlands daily on the temple steps notwithstanding and returned home. The flower garlands which she so left on the steps used to be seen the next day on the god's image, day after day. This miracle attracted the notice of the holy Brahmans, who therefrom declared her immaculate, and said that the conception was the result of divine will. She was not, however, taken back into their own community, but a separate caste was started for her from that day, her occupation being making of flower garlands and other such temple service."

We are thankful to the Census Commissioner for having embodied these traditions in his Report; but it would be idle indeed to criticise them. They would have been even beneath our notice but for the currency and credence such false derivations receive in this land, even when the etymology of a word lies, as in this case, unmistakably on the surface. 'Variyan' is obviously the man with the *Vâri*, and *Vâri* in Tamil means a broomstick or rake—*Vârukol* and *Vâriyal* being other derivatives, in everyday use, from the same root, *vâr*, to collect, clean, or sweep. Sweeping the

inner court of the temple was undoubtedly one of the special duties of the original Variyar or Varer, however much his descendants may now prefer the more leisurely and dignified function of tying up flower garlands for the use of the deity inside. Our Variyan, Adityan Adityan of Sattanur, it will be observed, had also a garland of flowers to supply, but the extra payment of the cooked rice offerings fixed by the grant would shew that he had other functions to discharge and other remunerations to receive.

But whatever were the duties and emoluments of the Variyan in question, it is more important for us to note that the full name of the sovereign who ruled over Venad in 578 was Sri Vira Kerala Martandavarman, which the metrical necessities of the *sloka* contracted into king Martanda. Equally, if not more important is the mention of the Kilapperur family name It will be remembered that the earliest of our inscriptions giving this family designation is the one taken from Kadinamkulam, dated 389[1]. I have not yet succeeded in finding out how the Venad royal house came to be associated with a village so far north as Kilapperur in the Chirayinkil Taluk. Further on we shall see how in subsequent times an important branch of the original stock assumed an exclusive right to this title. Already perhaps the royal family was getting split up into distinct branches, and it was found necessary thus to designate the branch to which the reigning sovereign of the time belonged.

But these doubts are nothing by the side of a more serious difficulty created by Mr. Shangoonny Menon. For whatever was meant by the addition of the Kilapperûr family name in this particular case, the inscription leaves no room for the least doubt that Sri Vira Kerala Martâṇḍavarman was the name of the Venad sovereign in 578. But Mr. Shangoonny Menon tells a different story. Having noted the death of Keralavarman three months after he

1 *Ante*, page 47.

succeeded to the throne of his uncle Ravivarman in 557 M.E., the author says: "Keralavarman Kulasekhara Perumal was succeeded by his twin brother Chera Udaya-Martâṇḍavarman. The reign of this sovereign was longer than that of all the Travancore monarchs. His Highness ascended the *masnad* while he was sixteen years of age and died at the ripe age of seventy-eight after a reign of sixty-two years. His reign was of a mixed character, partly attended with prosperity, and partly with troubles and annoyances, as is natural during such a long period, in which many vicissitudes might be expected. His Highness Chera Udaya Mârtâṇḍavarman performed the coronation ceremonies, and was styled Kulasêkhara-Perumâl. During the reign of this sovereign all the south-eastern possessions of Travancore on the Tinnevelly side were regained, and the sovereign often resided at Valliyûr and Chêramahâdêvi. In consequence of the mild and unwarlike disposition of this king, some of the subordinate chiefs in the east became refractory, and there was constant fighting, and latterly, while the sovereign was residing at Trivandram, the chief of Rettiapuram invaded Valliyûr, and the king's nephew, being defeated in battle and fearing disgrace, committed suicide. In these places, several grants of lands made by this Kulasêkhara-Perumâl remain, some of which we have already noticed. Chêramahâdêvi was his favourite residence, and consequently this sovereign was called Chera-Udaya-Martâṇḍavarman Towards the close of his reign, suspecting unfair proceedings on the part of the chief men of the Pandya state, the residence of the royal family was removed to Elayadathunad Hottarakaray (Kottarakkarai ?) and a governor was appointed to rule Valliyûr and other possessions in the east. This sovereign died in 619 at the ripe age of seventy-eight years."[1] Mr. Shangoonny Menon then by way of illustration gives a portrait of the king Chera Udaya Mârtâṇḍavarman. As this is one of the few reigns in the early Malabar centuries of which the author

1 Page 94, Mr. Menon's History.

attempts to give us any particulars, it would have helped us more than this attractive picture, if he had indicated the sources from which he borrowed his information. In itself it does not look very probable that the name Chera-Udaya could have been derived from Cheramahâdêvi. Cheramahâdêvi itself is explicable only as "(The village of) the great queen of Chera." Even supposing it to be a contraction for Cheramahâdêvi-Udaya, we have the irrefutable evidence of our inscriptions to prove that up to 578 at least, that is, up to the twenty-first year of his supposed long reign, he had neither that title nor the designation Kulasekhara-Perumâl, since a formal royal writ is the last place where such omissions would be permitted. On the other hand, the document proves that the king who ruled over Venad in that Malabar year had a distinctly different word as an integral part of his name. He was not, as Mr. Shangoonny Menon tells us, Chera Udaya Martâṇḍa-Kulasekhara-Perumâl, but Sri-Vira-Kerala-Martâṇḍavarma-Tiruvadi. Remembering how easily mistakes in dry lists of long compound names may occur, we could have supposed Chera Udaya Mártáṇḍa to have been either a predecessor or a successor of our Vira-Kerala-Martâṇḍavarman of 578, but for a remarkable coincidence. Both Mr. Shangoonny Menon and the author of our Sanscrit sloka are agreed as to the characteristic *mildness* of the sovereigns they respectively describe. But what confidence this singular circumstance breeds is rather rudely shaken by Mr. Shangoonny Menon's reference to the Rettiapuram chief. Rettiapuram may be taken for Ettaiyapuram, of which it is a vulgar corruption. But the Ettaiyapuram Zamindari was not itself in existence about this time to attack Valliyûr in the confines of Travancore. The traditions cherished by the family itself do not claim for its founder a higher antiquity than 1423 A.D. Dr. Caldwell thus summarizes the legends connected with the foundation of the Zamindari: 'On the defeat of Anna Devaraja, king of Vijayanagara, by Muhammad Ala'uddin, one Kumaramuttu Ettappa Nayaka, the ancestor of the Ettaiyapuram

Zamindars, fled from Chandragiri, in company with 64 armed relations 309 men at arms, and 1,000 dependants, with a certain number of accountants and others, and took refuge with Ati Vîra Parâkrama Pandya Raja at Madura, who appointed them to repress outrages in the country of the Kallars, and gave them some villages therein for their maintenance. This is represented to have taken place between 1423 and 1443. In process of time they moved on towards the south and became possessed of various villages in the Tinnevelly District, one of which, to which they gave the name of Ettaiyapuram, they made the capital."[1] Now, it is foreign to our purpose to test the truth of this traditional account of the origin of the Ettaiyapuram Zamindari. Whatever errors there may be in this account, it does not err on the side of modesty in the date assigned to its founder. If Kumaramuttu Ettappa Nayaka came really from Chandragiri, it is more likely that he fled from the place when Chandragiri was taken by the Muhammadans in 1645, than about 1423, when Alauddin is said to have attacked Vijayanagar—a further statement for which it is difficult to find any support. If his flight on the other hand had anything to do with the fall of Vijayanagara, the more appropriate period would be about 1565 and not 1423. But even taking the latter date as the correct time for the original Ettappa Nayaka, since we are told that only "*in process of time*" his successors established themselves at Ettaiyapuram, we cannot imagine how the "chief of Ettaiyapuram" could have invaded Valliyûr, not far from Cape Comorin, in the lifetime of Mr. Shangoonny Menon's Chera Udayamartâṇḍa Varman, who according to the author died in 619 M.E. or A.D. 1444.

But this last date raises a difficulty yet more formidable. We learn from an inscription at Navâyakkalam, in the Chirayinkil Taluk, dated 7 a.m., Monday, Pushya Star, *Panchami*, the 22nd Edavom, Kollam year 614, that the

1 *History of Tinnevelly*, page 84.

king of Venad on that date was Sri Vira Rama Mârtâṇḍa Varman, and it is therefore impossible that Mr. Shangoonny Menon's Chera Udayamártâṇḍa Varman, whether he was or was not identical with our Sri Vira Kerala Mârtâṇḍa Varman of 578, could have reigned up to 619, that is, full five years after the crown had passed to another individual. But curiously enough Mr. Shangoonny Menon mentions some sixty pages earlier and quite in another connection, an "inscription on the inner stone-wall of the Chêramahâdêvi Pagoda, dated Malayalam or Kollam year 614 (1439 A.D.), commemorating a grant by the Travancore king Chera Udayamârtâṇḍa Varman to the pagoda at that place while the grantee was residing in the Cheramahâdêvi palace". It is possible, of course, to reconcile the two inscriptions by supposing that Mr. Shangoonny Menon's is dated a month or so earlier than ours, in which case the year 614 would be the date both of the death of Chera Udayamártâṇḍa Varman and of the accession of Sri Vira Rama Mârtâṇḍa Varman. But in scientific researches nothing can be more dangerous than taking matters on trust. We have therefore to examine the Cheramahâdêvi inscription afresh. The Navâyakkalam inscription, also, is too important to be hurriedly disposed of. Until then, these two inscriptions are fully discussed, we may provisionally suppose that Sri Vira Kerala Mârtâṇḍavarman was otherwise known also as Chera Udayamartâṇḍa Varman, and that he continued to rule till the end of the sixth Malabar century—the period here taken up for investigation.

Conclusions

Before concluding I shall briefly recount the results arrived at in this paper. Unlike the fourth and fifth centuries dealt with in my previous paper, the sixth has not been left a pure blank in the history of Travancore, to be filled up by epigraphy. Besides Mr. Shangoonny Menon's History, which I have more than once alluded to, there is a more authoritative publication, the Government Almanac,

in which will be found a list of 35 sovereigns of Travancore, of whom the first four fall within our period. We have therefore to present the results of our inquiry in two aspects: positive and negative, consisting respectively of what we are able to affirm and what we are able to deny. The facts we affirm are:—(1)that in Saka 1296, corresponding to the Kollam year 550, the king of Venad was Âdityavarman surnamed Sarvânganâtha ; (2) that on the 27th Mesham, 578 M.E., or Saka 1325, the same country was governed by Sri Vira Kerala Mârtâṇḍavarma Tiruvadi of Kilappêrûr ; and (3) that on the 22nd Rishabha, 614 M.E., the king of the country was Sri Vira Rama Mârtâṇḍavarman. These few facts, no doubt, have many gaps ; but so far as they go, they are indubitable, or to be strictly sccurate, very nearly so. Being such they enable us to deny, with proportionate confidence, certain statements commonly believed to be true on the strength of the authorities above named. Mr. Shangoonny Menon's list of Travancore kings for the same period would stand thus: (1) Âdityavarman, who died in 510 M.E. (2) Sri Vira Rama Mârtâṇḍavarman, who reigned from 510 to 550, (3) Ravivarman, who ruled from 550 to 557 ; (4) Keralavarma Kulasekhara Perumal, who died 3 months after his coronation in 557 ; and (5) Chera Udayamârtâṇḍa Varma-Kulasekhara-Perumal who ruled from 557 to 619.

The list in the Travancore Almanac omits Âdityavarman, and begins with his successor in the above table. From the way in which it is printed with no reference to Mr. Shangoonny Menon's History, one would be led to think that it had some independent foundation, but closer examination tends to shew that its independence consists entirely in its orthography Year after year, for the last quarter of a century and more, this perennial page in the Annual informs us (1) that Sri-Vira-Rama-Mârtâṇḍa-Varma-Raja ruled 40 years beginning with 1335-36 ; (2) that Ravivarma-Raja ruled for 7 years beginning with 1375-76 ; (3) that Kaler Kulasekhara-Perumal ruled for a short time in the year 1382-83 ; and (4) that Chera Udayamârtâṇḍa-

Varma-Kulasekhara-Perumal ruled for 62 years beginning with 1382-83. The dates given in this list, if taken to be in the Christian era, correspond well enough with the Malabar years given by Mr. Shangoonny Menon, and with the exception of the name Kaler Kulasekhara-Perumal, which can hardly be identified with Keralavarma-Kulasekhara-Perumal, the dissimilarities in the names might be set down to individual idiosyncrasies in spelling. Now our records enable us to deny almost all the statements supported by these two authorities, and they are the only two in the field. For instance, if there is any truth in the inscriptions I have explained to you, it must follow (1) that Vira-Rama-Mârtâṇḍavarman could not have reigned up to 550 M.E., (2) that Ravivarman could not have commenced his reign in that year; (3) that in 578 the king of Travancore was not known as Chera-Udayâmartâṇḍa-Varman; and (4) that whenever Chera-Udaya did commence his reign, he could not have continued on the throne till 619 M.E. We cannot, therefore, safely look to these authorities to fill up the gaps left by the records which I have presented to you. We must leave that good work to future research, more systematically conducted than mine has been. My spasmodic, unaided efforts serve, perhaps, only to render the very darkness of the subject visible. But it has been well said; *Prudens quæstio dimidium scientiæ est.*" It is half way to knowledge when you know what it is that you have to know.

MISCELLANEOUS TRAVANCORE INSCRIPTIONS*

Work implies waste. No mason, however careful, can turn to account every stone quarried out, it may be at great cost, and given him to build with. Some break in dressing, and others are found not to suit. So it is with all arts and industries—literary and scientific labours not excepted. Perhaps, more of the poet's plots break in the course of construction than pots under the potter's wheel; and who can number the laboriously spun-out inductive generalizations that have snapped under the strain of exceptional phenomena? But what is lost for one end is seldom found good for none. The absolutely good-for-nothing is as rare in this imperfect world as the infinitely good-for-all. The chips that fall off from the chisels of the cabinet-maker are just the things for tops and toys to be made out of. Broken-down inductions and imperfect generalizations that the theorizer must perforce reject constitute "the wise saws and modern instances" of the practically shrewd.

Let me hope that the principle will apply to the materials I have gathered, and am still engaged in gathering, with a view to help the future historian of Travancore. From the nature of the case, only a small proportion of the inscriptions in any province of India will be found pregnant with political history. Lucky is the epigraphist who finds even one in a hundred turning out really such. Most of our lithic records are like that fixed proportion of postal covers, which year after year turn up with the "awfully' affectionate address "To my own dear uncle!" None the less unavoidable is the labour spent in discovering, copying, deciphering, and interpreting these evidently indefinite and ill-conceived stone documents. Though rejected as unfit by the makers of dynastic tables, may they not prove good as pegs to hang our ethnic speculations upon, or as sticks to lean on in the quagmires of philological conjections? At

---

* Published in *Indian Antiquary*, May, 1897.

any rate, containing, as they do, solid and substantial facts, they ought to be able to serve us at least as torches[1] in our weary wanderings in the dreary limitless past, exposing and exorcising the endless illusory legends, traditions, and such like *ignes fatui*, which alone now seem to people even the ages but one step removed from the present But utilitarian considerations apart, it seems to me a pious duty which we owe to our forefathers, to collect and preserve what memorials they have so lovingly left behind. To reject as trash such of them as have come to our notice, on the ground of their not answering any particular requirement of ours, would be adding insult to injury. It would seem as if we heard their last parting words and yet heeded them not !

I propose, therefore, in the following pages to record those inscriptions of Travancore which have come within my notice, but which I did not see my way to utilize in the course of my papers on the " Early Sovereigns of Travancore '. In doing so, I shall first take up those which give distinct dates in a definite era ; next, those giving regnal years of the then sovereigns, some of whose dates have now been ascertained, while others yet remain to be found out ; and lastly, those whose age seems doomed for ever to remain a matter of mere conjecture. To all of them, I shall try to add notes and comments as I go on rendering them into English.

The three definite eras, made use of in Travancore records, are the Kollam, the Saka, and the Kali, and the origin of all of them seems to be equally enveloped in impenetrable mystery. It is quite natural that, to the limited intellect of man, the origin of many things should be shrouded in eternal darkness, such as the origin of the Universe, or the origin of evil, which is perhaps just the same question

1 A part of the incantations resorted to for frightening the Malabar devils is the waving of small torches called *Koltiri*, made by twisting waste cloth round tiny chips of certain kinds of hard timber.

on its moral side; but that the origin of so artificial an institution, of so simple a convention, as the institution of an era, an era to reckon time with, should admit of speculation is itself nothing short of a marvel—a standing monument of the historical ineptitude of the Indian races. But the era with which we have mostly to do here is the Kollam, and so I offer a few remarks on it before passing on to the inscriptions dated in that era.

The Kollam Era

Though the Kollam era is in everyday use, no one seems to know why it was started, or what Kollam itself means. The word "Kollam" has a striking resemblance in sound to the name of several important towns. It is evidently derived from the same root as Korkai, the oldest known capital of the Pandyas. It was Dr. Caldwell who first suggested the obvious analysis of Korkai into *kol*+*kai*, as well as its identification with the "*Kolkhoi*" of the Greek writers of the first and the second Christian centuries. I feel unable, however, to accept Dr. Caldwell's interpretation of the root-meaning of Korkai. "*Kol* in Tamil", says he, "means 'to slay,' and *kai*, 'hand or arm.' *Kolkai*, therefore, would seem to mean 'the hand or arm of slaughter,' which is said to be an old poetical name for 'an army, a camp,' the first instrument of Government in a rude age. *kai* is capable also of meaning 'place,' *e.g.*, *Podigai*, 'place of concealment,' the name of the mountain from which the river of *Korkai* takes its rise. Compare the name Coleroon, properly *Kollidam*, 'the place of slaughter'." "I am sorry I cannot agree with Dr. Caldwell in any of the derivations here suggested. The word *kol* means many other things in Tamil besides 'to kill,' which last seems to me to be the last of its connotations to be thought of in this connection. In no age, however rude, could a nation have looked upon their capital as a place where people were killed and not protected. No doubt, the expression "*kollum kolaiyum*" is often used, particularly in Malayalam, to signify political

authority or rather criminal jurisdiction, but the very combination would seem to prove that *kol* is distinct from *kolai* or 'slaughter.' The particle *kai* in Korkai is obviously the well-known suffix of verbal nouns as in *seygai* and *irukkai,* and not an independent word meaning 'hand or arm.' Though the word kai[1] meaning 'hand' is used by itself in connection with dispositions of armies, very much as the term "wing" in English, yet neither in poetical nor in popular Tamil does *Kolkai* occur in the sense of 'army or camp.' That the verbal suffix *kai* is sometimes found in connection with words which by metonymy indicate localities may be admitted, but by itself it never means 'a place,' as Dr. Caldwell suggests as an alternative interpretation. Nor is he happy in his illustrations. *Podigai*, a corruption of *Potika,* the Sanscritized form of *Podiyam,* is never found in classical Tamil, or in accredited lexicons like Divakaram and Nighantu. The Tamilians recognize only *Podiyam* and *Podiyil*—not *Podigai* or *Potika*—as the name of the famous mountain of their patron saint Agastya.[2] Nor is it beyond doubt whether Coleroon is *Kollidam* or *Kollidam.* But whatever be its correct form, it is difficult to conceive why so large a river should also have been a place of slaughter in any age, however rude or remote. I feel quite sceptical, therefore, about the slaughter-theory of Dr. Caldwell. All that we can accept then out of these etymological speculations is that *Korkai* is analysable into Kol + kai; and that is the important point we have here to bear in mind.

If *kol* is the root of Korkai, it is even more obviously the root of Kollam – *am* being as good a suffix of verbal nouns as *kai.* Compare, for instance, the word *nokkam.* It seems to me further that *Kochchi* or Cochin, one of the best of the natural harbours in the world, is also derived from the same root. The equivalent term *Balapuri* is a ludicrous

---

1 E. G., Valangai and Idangai—'the Right and Left wings' which have now come to stand as collective names of certain groups of castes.

2 (Compare Ind. Ant., Vol. XVIII, p. 241—E. H.)

Sanscrit translation of the Dravidian name *Kochchi*, for which the *Keralamahatmyam* is chiefly responsible. Whether Cochin is identical or not with the *Colcis Indorum*—the Indian Colcis—of the Peutinger Tables, as I surmise it is, we cannot be far wrong in analysing it into *kol* + *chi*, *chi* being another well-known suffix of Tamil words. It seems to me probable that the well-known ports Colombo and Colachel are also derived from the same root, though greatly disguised. *Kolambu* and *Kolachchai* are respectively analysable into *kol* + *am* + *pu*, and *kol* + *a* + *chai*; *am*, *pu* and *chai* being known suffixes of Tamil words. That Sanscrit writers habitually translate Kollam into Kolamba may, to some extent, serve to show how Kolampu and Kolachai may have been corrupted into *Kolambu* and *Kolachchai*. If we are right so far, the root-meaning of *kol* becomes more or less manifest. All of them—Korkai and Colombo; Colachel, Cochin and Quilon in Travancore; and Quilandy in Malabar—are sea-port towns; and *Kolkai*, *Kollam*, and *Kolchi* (Cochin) are known to have been famous in ancient days for their natural harbours. May not, then, the root-idea of these words be 'sea-port, harbour, or emporium of trade'? We find support for our conjecture in the current use of *Kolla* in Malayalam—*Kolla* means a breach, as of a dam, through which water flows,—and both Quilon and Cochin are remarkable for the inlet or breach in the coast-line through which the sea communicates with the back-waters. That Korkai was situated at the mouth of the Tamraparni, and that the town which grew up in its neighbourhood and finally superseded it about the time of Marco Polo[1] was called *Kayal*, meaning 'a lagoon,'[2] would show that Korkai must have been in its palmy days as much distinguished for an inlet into its backwater as Cochin is to-day. This then strikes me as the most probable connotation of *kol*, and we may accordingly take *Kollam* (Quilon), *Kolkai*

---

1 See Dr. Caldwell's *History of Tinnevelly*, p. 37.

2 Kayal is a good Tamil word, though current only in Malabar.

(Korkai), and *Kolchi* (Cochin), if not Colombo and Colachel as well, as originally meaning towns with natural harbours formed by a breach in the coast-line.

But as it is not safe to be dogmatic in such matters, I would suggest one or two other possible explanations of the word *Kollam* before proceeding to consider the era named after it. Comparing such words as *Kollai* in Tamil, meaning 'an enclosure round a dwelling-place', *kolli*, which, in Canarese, means 'crooked,' in Malayalam, 'crooked and therefore worn out,' as well as 'a crooked corner or valley,' and in Travancore Tamil, 'a net made of ropes for enclosing and carrying unhusked cocoanuts,' *kôlal* in Tamil and *kôlugu* in Malayalam meaning 'to enclose,' and *kôlam*, 'a figure or form with the outlines meeting one another,' we may easily conclude that one of the root-ideas of *kol* must be 'an enclosure,' and therefore 'a town.' Indeed, it will be remembered, the English word "town," derived as it is from the Anglo-Saxon root "tun," meaning an enclosure or garden round a dwelling-house, would exactly correspond to the current use of *kollai*; and *kollam*, *kolchi*, *kolkai*, may, therefore, be all regarded as meaning nothing else than enclosed towns as opposed to the open country. If neither of the above derivations is found satisfactory for reasons I cannot now divine, there is yet a third which I may, perhaps, be permitted to add. The word *kolu* means in all the Dravidian languages 'dignity, pomp, or majesty;' and it is easy to shew that the final vowel is no part of the root. The adjective *korra*[1], as in *korrakkudai* and the substantives *korravan* and *korram*, meaning respectively 'king' and 'kingship,' are evidently derived from the same root as *kolu*, which can be nothing else than *kol*, the radical in *kollam*, *kolkai* and *kolchi*. These towns would then seem to mean places associated with power, pomp, or royal presence —a meaning admirably suited to the facts (1) that at least

1 The particle *tu* which changes the *l* of *kol* into *r* is an important and widely-used element in the formation of Tamil words, which it would be foreign to our purpose here to explain or to illustrate.

two of them are known to have been real capitals of ancient royal families, and (2) that "other residences of kings were formerly called *kollam*, such as Koḍuṅgalûr, etc.," according to Dr. Gundert. In the face of these and similar other easy interpretations the root *kol* seems capable of, I am not prepared to accept Dr. Caldwell's slaughter-theory. More positively absurd would be any attempt to trace *kollam* to *kolamba*, the meaningless jargon of Sanscrit writers.

Let us now turn to the era itself. Till recently European scholars would seem to have not known even so much as that it was an era. Mr. Prinsep calls it a cycle—the cycle of Parasurama, and Dr. Burnell, in correcting this error, falls into another. He rightly says it is no cycle but an era, but adds that "it began in September 824 A.D." and "is only used in the South Tamil country and Travancore."[1] In Travancore and in the Tinnevelly district, where the era is used, the year begins not in September, but in the middle of August, and the province where it begins in September is not Travancore or the South Tamil country, but Malabar, which Dr. Burnell does not include. Why the Malabar year begins a month later in Malabar proper cannot be expected to be easy of explanation, when so little is known about the origin of the era itself. The difference in the local use of the year is nevertheless worthy of being borne in mind, at least in connection with the dispute whether the Kollam era is so named after Quilon in Travancore or Quilandy in Malabar proper. Neither of them need claim the honour exclusively, since the era has a different month for it commencement in the two places contending for it.

But whether connected with either or with both, it is of greater importance to know what event, if any, the era is intended to commemorate. Dr. Gundert suggests in his excellent lexicon, that it was meant to celebrate the foundation of a Siva temple; but as no reason is given to support his opinion, we cannot afford to discuss the view.

---

1 See Elements of South Indian Palæography, p. 73.

No important Siva temple of any antiquity is known, however, to exist either at Quilon or at Kollam in Malabar. In the nature of things, we should expect a grander event of greater national importance in justification of the starting of an era than the building of a nameless temple. The only two events of any importance in Malabar which can be assigned to this epoch (1) the mysterious disappearance of the last of the Perumals, and (2) the death of Saṅkaracharya, the most renowned of the Indian scholiasts.

The tradition in Malabar regarding the first is that the last Chêramân Perumal embraced Muhammadanism, and left the Indian shores for Mecca, and that it was in consequence of his sudden departure that the Chera empire, including Malabar, became split up into petty principalities. Following the tradition, Mr. Logan has gone so far as to identify a tomb on the shores of the Persian Gulf as that of the missing Perumal, and with the help of the epitaph thereon, to fix the date of his death as *Kali* year 3931 or Kollam year 6. Allowing 6 years as spent in the Perumal's trans-marine peregrinations, we may plausibly take the Kollam era as founded on the day he sailed away from Malabar. But antecedent probability is wholly against this theory. It is not at all likely, in the first place, that any nation would establish an era to celebrate a national disgrace. To every Hindu, even after so much of Muhammadan intercourse, the conversion to Islam is an abhorrence; and how much should it have been a thousand years ago in the case of so revered a king as the true representative of the old line of Chêramân Perumals? It is suprisingly strange again in the next place, that all Malabar and Travancore should have united to start an era exactly at the point of time when their integrity, according to the very hypothesis, was irreparably lost. The Chera empire is said to have fallen to pieces, because of the disappearance of the Perumal; and yet the empire was at one, according to the theory, to start an era which is still in use throughout

its original extent! In the third place, if the era were founded to commemorate any single event such as the exit of the last of the Perumals, how could we account for the fact of the era beginning in August in Travancore and a full month later in Malabar proper? Can we suppose, without positively spoiling the beauty and mystery of the story, that the Perumal sailed a month earlier from the port of Quilon in Travancore and then landed in Malabar to quit it finally thirty days later? But lastly, the oral tradition, on which alone the theory is based, is itself contradicted by the only written record we have, which refers to the event. The mysterious disappearance of the Perumal[1] is in fact the last of the legends embodied in the Periya-Puranam, the historical value of which, as we have seen elsewhere, it is impossible to exaggerate. The date of this Purana cannot, for reasons explained elsewhere,[2] be later than the twelfth Christian century, or about 350 years after the establishment of the Kollam era. Surely, the version of the story, as found in this written record of the twelfth century, deserves greater credit than an oral tradition which cannot be traced back for more than a couple of centuries. The Periya-Puranam version then is this:—" While the Saiva saint Sundarar was at Tiruvanjaikkalam, the Chera capital, celebrating it in certain hymns which still exist, the time came for him to depart the earth. Accordingly, one morning, the angels of Mount Kailasa waited upon him with a white elephant and a commission to translate him athwart the sky to that rocky abode of gods. Elated beyond measure, the saint tarried not even to utter a parting word to his royal friend, but, ascending the celestial elephant, started forthwith on his travel through the azure blue. The Perumal, coming to know what had taken place, and unable to sustain the separation, mounted his steed and uttered a mantra in its ears, which enabled it to ascend into the air and over-

---

1 See Vellanai-sargam, Periya Puranam.

2 Age of Tiru Gnanasambandar.

take the paradisiacal pachyderm. The ministers and generals of the king, beholding the miraculous scene, shook off their mortal coils with the help of their swords and followed their beloved king. So the aerial procession reached Mount Kailasa, but the Perumal found admission into the divine presence only after he had composed the poem called *Adi-Ula*, which one *Masattan*[1] is said in the Purana to have communicated to the world here below by reciting it in the town of Tiruppidavur."

Such then is the legend as embodied in the Periya-Puranam ; and all that it enables us to conclude is that a saintly Chera prince mysteriously disappeared from his capital. There is nothing whatever in this or any other written record of respectable antiquity to lend support to the story of the conversion and the voyage to Mecca ; and without such support it is not safe to accept the evidence of the tomb on the shores of the Persian Gulf as relevant to the question of the origin of the Kollam era.

Proceeding then to the next great event about this time with which the Malabar era may possibly be associated, we may at once state that the age of Sankaracharya is not yet beyond the pale of dispute. It may be even questioned whether he was a native of Malabar. But all the theories yet advanced with any show of justification converge in pointing to the early years of the ninth century as the probable period of the great philosopher. May not then the Kollam era be taken to commemorate some event in connection with the life of Saṅkara ? The only definite date yet assigned to the Acharya with any degree of probability is that of Mr. K. B. Patnak, according to whom Saṅkara must have died in 820 A.D.[2] i.e., four years before the commencement of the era. The date of his birth, according

---

1 It is difficult to say who this Masattanar was, or how he obtained a copy of the poem composed in Kailasa. May he be the same Sattan, the corn-merchant, who narrated the story of Silappadikaram to its author Ilangovadigal ?

2 (See *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XI, p. 175—E. H.)

to the slokas in a manuscript volume in the possession of one Govinda Bhattar of Belgaum, is Vibhava-varsha, Kali year 3889; and that of his death, full moon in Vaisakha, Kali year 3921. Thus, then, it is impossible to connect the establishment of the Kollam era with any event in Saṅkara's life, he having died four years before the commencement of the era itself.

Indeed, I must confess, I do not feel disappointed at this result. The curious difference we commenced with noting in the reckoning of the year in Malabar and Travancore would show that the era, whatever its origin, could not have been the consequence of any particular historical event. It would be quite in keeping with the character of the people if it turned out to be the result of some grand astronomical conventions rather than of events in the humbler walks of human life. Finding among the celestial phenomena, too, no event of any importance about the year 824 A.D. except the appearance of a comet in China, I can suggest now no other explanation of the era than that it seems to me to be the modification of another older era current in Upper India under the name of Saptarshi, or Sastrasamvatsara.[1] The peculiarity of this northern era is that though it is to-day 4972, it is spoken of as 72, so that omitting all hundreds it would be found to be identical with our Malabar year, except for 4 months beginning with Mesha. The Kashmir calendars calculated in this era and other recorded dates in it usually begin with this formula: *Sri-Saptarshi-chârânumatêna* Samvat 4972 *tatha cha samvat* 72, i.e., 'the year 4972, in agreement with the course of the Saptarshis, and, therefore, the year 72'. It would thus appear that up to the year 99, the Kollam year was just identical with the Saptarshi year. May it not be then that our Kollam year is simply the Saptarshi era with its origin forgotten, and, therefore, counted on into the hundreds? It is by no means extravagant to suppose that the people who

1 See *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XX, p. 149.

lived in the Kollam year 99 went on to name the next year 100, and not the cypher year, in spite of whatever astronomical reminiscences that survived in the minds of the almanac-makers of that age. In fact, nothing could have been more natural, and once the numeration was permitted, the issue of an independent era exactly of the kind we have, was inevitable. The only fact which would then require explanation is why, when the Saptarshi begins with *Mesha*, our Kollam should commence with the month of *Simha*. In all probability the astronomers of the period, who determined upon the adoption of the era, found it necessary so to amend the northern luni-solar year, in order to convert it into a purely solar one as the Kollam year professes to be. While agreed as to the necessity of the amendment, the astronomers of Malabar were apparently not at one with their contemporaries in Travancore as to the number of months that had to be so left out; and hence, perhaps, the divergence we have already noticed as to the month with which the new year was to begin—whether it was to be Simha or Kanya. That the era obtaining in Travancore should thus be assimilated with the one in Kashmir, the other extremity in the continent of India, must, at first sight, appear strange; but it is not certainly stranger than the close similarity which Mr. Fergusson notes in the styles of architecture obtaining in Travancore and in Nepal. What our only historian of Travancore says with respect to the origin of this era is entirely in consonance with our theory. "In the Kali year 3926 when King Udaya Martanda Varma was residing in Kollam (Quilon)," says Mr. Menon, "he convened a council of all the learned men in Kerala with the object of introducing a new era, and after making some astronomical researches, and calculating the solar movements throughout the twelve signs of the zodiac, and counting scientifically the number of days occupied in this revolution in every month, it was resolved to adopt the new era from the first of Chingom of that year, 15th August 825, as Kollam year one and to call it the solar year." What

need could there have been for all these "astronomical researches," "calculation" and "scientific countings", unless the astronomers of the period, anxious to start a new era, were adopting and amending for their purpose one that was actually current at the time? If those scientific men were really adopting an existing era, none could have suggested itself with greater propriety than the Saptarshi year—the "Sastra-samvatsara", the scientific year par excellence. As regards the Kali, the Malabar astronomers of 824 A.D. probably found that it was itself in need of even larger alterations than the Saptarshi. The latter is exactly 25 years later than the Kali, and it appears to me extremely likely that these 25 years were left out of the Kali to form the Saptarshi era for some astronomical reasons similar to those which I have ventured here to assign for the omission of the first 4 or 5 months from Mesha to Simha in the conversion of the Saptarshi into the Kollam. But this is a speculative question, and I am afraid it will continue to be a debatable one for many years yet to come.

MISCELLANEOUS TRAVANCORE INSCRIPTIONS

II[1]

Proceeding then to the inscriptions, I propose to record them in the order of their dates. As the collection is still continued, we shall have to insert later on in the series such of them as may be hereafter found to come between, according to their dates.

I

Puravâri Inscription, 335 M.E.

The earliest of the inscriptions with me which is yet to be published is one dated 335 in the Malabar era It is found on the northern side of a *maṇḍapam* in front of the old temple at Puravâri-Chaturvêdimaṅgalam already referred to in another paper.[2] It runs thus :—

No. $\frac{1^{3}}{41}$ — $\frac{\text{TAMIL}}{\text{TAMIL}}$

Text.[4]

1. (Svasti Sri Kollam-tôn)[5] ri 335 m ândinnu edirâm ându Idapa-ñayiru Kottar âna mummuḍi-chôlana-
2 llur Kuruṅkudi Tiru-mâru-mârpanên Puravâri Viṇṇagar Aḷvarkku nittal nimantam achandira-taran-chelvatâka nâm viṭṭa nilam âvidu Ivvûr en nilam Uttama-râman-kâṟukku teṟku kaḷḷari-
3. kku mekku (vadakku-êri-kkalukku)......Vitai-ari-valukku.

---

1 Published in *Indian Antiquary*, June, 1897.

2 See "Some Early Sovereigns of Travancore," page 18.

3 The number above the line gives the serial number of this new series and the one below the number in my register.

4 The stones bearing this inscription having been disturbed, the text has been reconstructed by bringing together bits of sentences engraved on stones now standing apart from one another.

5 Brackets indicate words supplied and those indistinct and doubtful.

4. ki (lakku) Nank ellai nadu (vil nilam Mukkâni).

5. yum Uttama-râman-kaḷukku vadakku A(ru) viṭaikku mêkku chattu-mukkaṭṭukku kilakku nedun.

6. tu (ru) valukku teṛku Innank ellaiyil naduvil tavarai nilam kâniyum âka nilam oru-mûvum merpadi-yuril Saṇkara vidangan Ivv Âḷvârku tiru-vamudukku achandira-taran-chel-

7. vatâka viṭṭa nilam Ivvûr oru-pûvil chêruda vayaṛ-kâ.

8. lukku vaḍakku kiḷakku Pû-muṛaikku (teṛkum Nâñchi-nâṭṭu-kuṇdu (ni-).

9. lam x x Nâñchîsvaram uḍaiyâr dêva-dâṇam Pirâvaṛaikku mêṛkum Inâṇk = el.

10. lai naduvu nilam arai-mâvarai-kkâṇiyum Iru-pûvil nilam Âṛṛukku mêkku Aṇavaratan-vayaṛkalukku teṛku kuṇḍaṛaikku kiḷakku Veppaṛaikku vaḍakku Innâkku = ellai naḍuvu kiḍanda nilan.

11. kâni-yaraikkâniyum âka nilam oru mûvum Ivv = iru.

12. vô (mu) m Innila [m] Iraṇḍu [mâvum kai-k] koṇdu Itu-chem.

13. pilum veṭṭi-kkoḷkaveṇṛu Tiru-ppaḍiyilê nir-varttu-kkuḍuttôm Ivv = Âḷwâr.

14 kaṇmikaḷukku kuṛuṅkudi Tiru-mâṛu-mâṛpaṇum Sankara-viḍangaṇum Ivv = Iruvo [m] Ivai Kuruṇ-kuḍi Tiru-maṛu-mârpaṇ eluttu Saṅkara Viḍaṅgan Vijai-yûran = avaikku si-râma-

15. n Tirukkai-eḷuttu Ippaḍi aṛivên Viḍaṅgan Sa-

16. ṅkaraṇ eḷuttu Ippa [di]

Translation

"Hail! Prosperity! In the year opposite to the year 335 after the appearance of Kollam, I, Tirumârumârpan of Kuruṇkudi (living) in Kôṭṭar *alias* Mummudi-Chôḷanallûr,

make a gift of the following land, to support, as long as the moon and the stars last, the daily oblations to the god Viṇṇagar Âlvar of Puravari, *viz.*, my land named * * *, measuring *mukkâni*, situated in this village, and within these four boundaries *viz.*, to the south of the Uttamaraman channel, to the west of Kalarai, to the north of Vaḍakku êṛikkal, and to the east of Vitaiyarivai; and also my land called Tavaṛai, measuring *Kani*, situated in this village and within these four boundaries, *viz.*, to the north of the Uttamarâman channel, to the west of Aruvidai, to the east of Châṭṭumukkam, and to the south of Neḍuntuṛuval: the total making one *ma* of land; and I, Sankara-Vidangan of the same place, make a gift of the following lands to furnish rice to this Âlvar, as long as the moon and the stars last, *viz.*, the land (measuring) *araimâvraikkâni* among the one crop lands of this village situated within these four boundaries, *viz.*, to the north and east of the Sêrnta Vayaṛkal (Field-Stone), to the south of the Pûmuṛai, to the west of Nâṅchînattu Kuṇḍunilam and Pirâvaṛi belonging to the temple of Nânchîsvaramudaiyâr, and also the land (measuring) *Kâniyaraikkâni* among the double-crop lands situated within the following four boundaries, *viz.*, to the west of the river, to the south of Anavaratan Vayarkal, to the east of Kuṇdaṛai, and to the north of Veppaṛai, making a total of one *ma*; both of us solemnize the gift by pouring water at the holy steps and wish this gift to be entered in copper-plate. Thus do we, Tirumârumârpan of Kuṛuṅkuḍi and Sankara Viḍaṅgaṇ, make this gift to the servants of this Âlvar.—Witness whereof our hands: Tirumarumarpan of Kuṛuṇkudi (signature), Sankara Viḍaṇgan (signature), Sri-Raman on behalf of Vijaiyûran Sabha (holy signature). Thus do I know, Vidangan Sankaran."

Unbounded must have been the self-complaisance of the two good men of those days, Tirumârumârpan and Sankara-Viḍangan, as they wended their way back from the temple after having thus satisfied themselves of the security and permanence of their charitable endowment for all time

to come. For, little could they have then dreamt that the very stones bearing the inscription would come to be pulled asunder and displaced so completely in a subsequent structure as to tax our ingenuity and patience in the attempt to piece together and find out the meaning of their lithic document. The stones as they are now found forming the basement of the *mandapam* give but a chaos of words that do not at all run into one another ; and it is by suitable transpositions of their sections that we have been able to extract any sense out of them. As for the endowment itself, let us hope that the publication of this document will produce no needless qualms of conscience in those who now enjoy the property, no doubt on good authority and long possession. As regards the donors, both appear to have been men of Kuṛuṅkudi or Tirukkuṛuṅkudi in the Tinnevelly District, but long settled in Kottar. Neither of their names, Tirumarumârpan (meaning one with the goddess of fortune in his breast) and Vidaṅgay (meaning the unwrought), is now in current use. That one of the witnesses to the deed bears the name of the second donor inverted would prove that the second donor at least was not without issue, and that in all probability the two donors were brothers, so that the signature of the son of the second was taken as sufficient evidence of the consent of the family to their free gift. Nothing else can we now know about these generous Vaishnavas of that day. Nor do we know anything of that Sri-Raman whose holy signature on behalf of the village association was held sufficient to indicate his acceptance of the gift on the part of the temple authorities. In all probability, he was the Brahmin manager of the shrine or the head of the temple-servants Neither of Vijayûr nor of the Nâñchisvaramuḍaiyar temple mentioned in the document have I succeeded in gathering any information.

It is remarkable that the system of land measurement followed is the one that since the days of Rajaraja seems to have been in use in the Tanjore District. It is in itself a wonderful system. It divides a *veli* equal to 6½ acres

into a series of primary fractions $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{8}$, $\frac{1}{16}$, $\frac{1}{20}$, $\frac{1}{80}$ and $\frac{1}{320}$, then into a further series of secondary fractions being $\frac{1}{320}$ of the above series, and again into a tertiary series of $\frac{1}{320}$ of the second, and so on, so that a *kil kil mundiri* of a *veli* would cover nothing more than an infinitesimal portion of space measuring but 81/102400 of a square inch. That the lands in Nanchinad must have been surveyed for revenue purposes in this fine system of measurement sometime before 335 M.E., the date of our present inscription, is proved by the description of the extent of the land endowment in terms of that system. The four pieces said to have been granted measured one *ma* which in current measurement would make 13/40 of an acre or 32½ cents or 2½ paras of land. It will be curious to know when and by whom this Tanjore method of Revenue Survey was introduced and carried out in South Travancore. It seems to me probable that it must have been due to some of the successors of Rajaraja, who conquered and ruled over South Travancore and Tinnevelly in the previous century. No trace of this system is discoverable in places nearer Trivandram, nor does it now obtain currency either in the Madura or in the Tinnevelly Districts, proving thereby (1) that even in the palmiest days of the greatest modern Chola power, places about Trivandram or North Venad were not subject to foreign sway, and (2) that the Chola Power did not last long enough in places to the South of Madura to enable their system of land measurement to take root in the country.

On the use of the curious word *edir* (opposite) in the expression " the year opposite the year 335 after the appearance of Kollam," about which there has been an apparently endless controversy, we shall comment on a future occasion, as in this case there is not the confusing double year notation which has given rise to it. " After the appearance of Kollam " does not necessarily mean after the foundation of a town called Kollam—appearance being scarcely an apt word to designate the construction of a city.

It may mean here nothing more than "after the reckoning by Kollam years came into use." We may, perhaps, note in passing that the king of Travancore about the date of this inscription was Vira-Ravivarman whose name we meet with in the following year in an inscription on the walls of this very temple.

KOTTAR INSCRIPTION, 392 M.E.

The next record in the order of date is engraved on the southern wall of a maṇḍapam in front of the Cholapuram temple in Kôttar. We have already referred to this shrine founded in honour of that great and victorious Chola king Rajendra *alias* Kulottunga, the hero of the Kallingattu Parani [1] It runs thus:—

No. 2/3 — TAMIL / TAMIL

Text

1. Svasti Sri Kolla(m) 392 m-ându Kali-yuga-vaṛsha nálâyirattu-munnuṛṛu orupattêlâm-ândi-

2. nn-edirâm-(a) ndu viruchika-nâyiṛṛu Nañchi-nâttu Tiru-Koṭṭarâna Mummuḍi Cholanallur-udaiyâr-Ra-

3. jendra-Choliswa(ra)mmuḍaiya mahâ-dêvarku Kotta-rana Chola-Keralapuraṭṭu-khulattur Kesavan-araisu-vai-

4. ṭṭa Tiru-nand(a)-viḷakku Onru Ivvilakk-onṛukkum Ivan tanta achchu ettu Ivv-achch-ettum

5. Ik-kâ-(vi)r-(Siva) Brahmanarôm kaikkondu poliyut-taka muttamar-chandratittavar cheluṭṭuvôm.

Translation

"Hail! Prosperity! In the year 392 opposite the Kaliyuga year 4317, the Sun being in Vrichika (Scorpio), (the following agreement is made):—Kesavan Arasu of Kulaṭṭur in Kottar alias Chola-Keralapuram arranges for a perpetual lamp to be lit in honour of the Mahadeva of the

---

[1] *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. 24, p. 254.

temple of Rajendracholisvaram *alias* the lord of Mummudi-Cholanal̤l̤ur, otherwise known as holy Kottar in Nanchinâdu, and pays for the upkeep of this one lamp eight *achchu*, and we the Siva Brahmans of this temple, accepting this sum of eight *achchu* given by this man, promise, out of the interest accruing therefrom, to keep up the light without default as long as the sun and the moon exist."

But the sun and the moon of the Siva Brahmans have long been set, and no unwelcome ray of light now disturbs the serpents inside. As regards the donor, what sin he was thus seeking to purge himself of, or perchance what blessing to purchase with his eight *Achchu*—an heir of his body or success in his trade?—it is impossible now to find out. That he was no king, though he bore the name of Arasu, is clear from the way in which he is spoken of by the Siva-Brahmans. Ministers of religion generally know how to behave well and will never call a king "this man", particularly when he pays them *achchu* or coins of value. Whatever an *achchu* was worth it will be seen that eight of them were enough to yield such interest as to keep up a perpetual light. The word used for "interest" is poliyuttu (feeding by multiplication), and there can be no doubt that it is from this root that the Malayalam word *palisai* is derived—the translation being marked by *polisai*, which occasionally turns up in old inscriptions.

But the most curious feature of this document is the multiplicity of names used for Kottar. This old name seems to have successfully withstood all the Chola efforts to supersede it with their own denominations. It seems to have been one of the peculiar ways of the Cholas of the Parantaka dynasty to commemorate their conquests by altering the names of villages, towns, and provinces so as to flatter their own vanity; and the consequence was that Chola geography came to suffer as much from the plague of homonyms as the kings themselves. In all probability Kottar was called Mummudi-Cholanallur—the good town of

the thrice-crowned Chola—in honour of its first Chola conqueror, Rajaraja, one of whose *birudas* was Mummudi. On its re-conquest by Rajendra, it became the seat of a shrine called after that famous emperor, and was accordingly known as Rajendracholisvaram or simply Cholisvaram or Cholapuram. The term Chola-keralapuram, which at the date of this inscription seems to have been the official designation for Kottar, would seem to suggest that some amicable arrangement subsisted about that time by which the Kerala or Venad prince enjoyed its possession under the suzerainty of the Cholas – a conclusion we have pointed out as also otherwise probable.

Before passing on to the next inscription, I would request my readers to bear in mind the use of the perplexing word *edir*, or "opposite", in the phrase recording the date of this deed. Here it unquestionably means "equal to"—"the Kollam year 392 equal or corresponding to the Kali year 4317". It may be also well to note in passing that this is a fine specimen of the Chola style of inscriptions, where the Tamil-Grantha characters are freely intermixed with the Tamil ones. The King of Travancore about the date of this inscription was Sri-Vira-Raman Keralavarman whom our Kadinamkulam record shews as having been on the throne just three years previously.

III

KOTTAR INSCRIPTION, 396 M.E.

The next inscription I propose to present is one dated 4 years later, and inscribed on the same wall of the same shrine Rajendra-Cholisvaram. It runs thus :—

No. $\frac{3}{4}$ — TAMIL / TAMIL

Text

1. Svasti Sri Kollam-tônri 396 mâandu mitun-nâyirṟu Nañchinattu-Tirukkottar-âna mummuḍi-Cholanaḷḷur (r) Uḍaiyâr

2. Irasendira-Choliswaram Udaiya Mahâdevar Sri-Koyilir Alûr-ana Vikrama Cholapandiyapurattu Malan Paratan mâta Elundarulu—

3. Vitta Kunram-erinda Pillaiyârku Ivan amurtu-padikku tanta achchu 15 Ivv-achchu patinaiñchum Ikkoyilir siva Bra—

4. hmanarôn-kai-kkondu poliyuttâka kaikkondu nittal naluri arisi-yun-kariyamurtum palakai-talaiyi—

5. I alandu erattu amurtu Cheyvippôm-âkavum Ippadi muttatey [1] nittal niman tam-âka Chandrâtittâvar Cheluttuvom-âka—

Translation

"Hail! Prosperity! In the year 396 after the appearance of Kollam when the sun was in Gemini (the following arrangement was made):—Malan Paratan of Alûr *alias* Vikrama-Cholapandiyapuram having given 15 achchu for providing daily oblations to the image of Kunram Erinda Pillaiyar, set up by his mother in the holy temple of Mahadeva of Rajendracholisvaram *alias* the lord of Mummudi-Chola-nallur, otherwise known as holy Kottar in Nanchinadu, we the Siva-Brahmans of this temple, accepting this sum of 15 *achchu* given by this man, shall, out of the interest accruing therefrom, measure out every day on the temple plank[2] a nali and a half of rice and the required vegetables, and, duly cooking[3] the same, shall offer them as oblation. Thus do we promise to discharge this our daily duty without failure as long as the moon and the sun endure."

Here then we have an illustration of the manner in which idols multiply in temples. The good mother of Malan Paratan, anxious to secure special merit in the eyes of her favourite deity, set up an image of Kunram Erinda

1 The *y* or *iv* at the end of this word is an obvious error.

2 This is probably the plank placed on the doorway of the temple.

3 This expression might mean "after submitting the amount to be checked."

Pillaiyar or 'the young divinity who pierced the hill' meaning of course Subramanya with reference to his destruction of the mountain of Krauncha ; and the temple authorities always encouraged the creation of such sub-shrines as it invariably tended to increase the temple endowments and to enlarge the establishment under their control. In this case, the pious son invested 15 *achchu* for the support of his mother's favourite deity, and since the interest thereon was enough to fetch every day one nali and a half of rice and vegetables, the amount could not but be regarded as considerable. Even at 12 per cent, 15 *achchu* could not have yielded as interest more than 1·8 *achchu* per year, which, putting aside the vegetables, was found enough to purchase 549 nalies of rice or over 26 paras of paddy, assuming the nali of 396 M.E. to have corresponded to a nali of our own times. The *achchu* here referred to therefore must have been a gold coin certainly worth more than 10 of our modern depreciated rupees. Unlike the two previous donors, Paratan appears to have been a native of South Travancore itself, as Alur, his native village, is a well known locality in the Eraniel Taluk, or, as it was then called, Ranasinganallur. The term Vikrama-Cholapandiyapuram used as a synonym of Alur is of course another illustration of the persistent Chola policy of creating a geographical nomenclature to suit their vanity. The language of this and the previous inscription being in excellent Tamil, we have to suppose either that there were about this time learned men attached to the temple to draft out such documents, or that the great Chola conquest of Nanchinad tended to the spread of general knowledge and learning. It is likely that this endowment was made like the previous one in the reign of Sri-Vira Raman Keralavarman of the Kadinamgulam inscription [1]

1 "The unfortunate death of this valued native contributor has brought this paper to an untimely end" – Richard Carnac Temple – Editor. The *Indian Antiquary*.

APPENDIX A

The following are copies of the inscriptions made use of in the above lectures, transliterated into ordinary modern Tamil and Malayalam characters. I use Tamil letters for every variety of *Vațțeluttu* and *old Tamil*, and Malayalam for *old Malayalam.* The interspersed *Tamil Granta* characters are shown as such. For purposes of palæography nothing short of Photo-lithographs can be of much real service. The English numerals indicate the lines as separated in the original engravings.

No. 1/9 **OLD TAMIL.**

ஒழுகணசேரிக்கடுக்த இராஜேந்திர சோழீசுவரர்கோயில்
மேற்குச் சுவரிலுள்ள சிலாலிகிதம்,

ஸ்வஸ்திஶ்ரீ கொல்லம் தோன்றி நாக மாண்டினெ
திரா மாண்டு சிங்கநாயிற்று வொருடு வாழ்ந்தருளு
கின்ற ஶ்ரீ[1] வீரகேரளபன்மர்க்கு அமைஞ்ச அதிகாரி
கள் வருக்கைப்பள்ளித்தனஞ் செயங்கண்டனும்
மண்ணார் வாழ்கின்ற ஶ்ரீ சக்கிராயுதனுகின்ற ஶ்ரீ
தொங்கப்பல்ல ஶ்ரீ சையனும்[2] எழுத்துச் சிறுவரிபண்
[3] (2) கண்ணங்கோவிந்தனும் உள்ளிருப்பு குன்றின்
மேல் விக்கிரமன் குன்றனுன கேரள சிங்கப்பல்லவரை
யனும் காரியமாக கோட்டாருன மும்முடி சோழ
நல்லூர் இராஜேந்த்ர சோழஈஶ்வரமுடைய மஹாதே
வர்க்கு மந்திரபோ (a) னகம் அமுதுசெய்தருள நித்தம்

1 Read இரவி – in (Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, page 17).—Ed.

2 Read வரையனும – in (Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, page 17).—Ed.

3 Read சிவரிபள்ளி – in (Tr. A. S., Vol. IV, page 17)

(*a*) போ is written பொ which is not a usual compound even in *old* Tamil.

அரிசி நானாழியு(3)ம் கறியமுது நெய்யமுதுந் தயிரமுது அடைக்காயமுது இலையமுதுக்கும் திருநொந்தா விளக்கு ஒன்றுக்கும் மும்முடி சோழநல்லூரிப்பால் வடசேரியில் இத்தேவர் தேவதானம் ஷாஜி கொள்ளுங் கடமை நெல்லுங்காசு(4)துங்கொண்டு இத்தேவற்கு இந் நிமந்தம் சந்திராதித்தவற் செல்வதாகப் பெலிக் கல்லினில் நீர்வார்த்து கல்வெட்டுவித்துக் குடுத்தோம்.

No. $\frac{2}{47}$ **Vatteluttu.**

திருவல்லத்தில் பிரமதேவர் கோவில் மேற்கு அஸ்திவாரச் சுவரிலுள்ள சிலாலிகிதம்.

ஸ்வஸ்தி ஸ்ரீ விரிச்சிகத்தில் வியாழநின்ற யாண்டு கொல்ல நாமக[1] தாமாணடை மகரஞாயிற்றுச் செயி தகாரியமாவிது வேணாடு வாழ்ந்தருளுகின்ற ஸ்ரீ வீர கேரள வர்மர் திரு (2)வடிக்கமஞ்ச அதிகாரருடைய தெங்ஙநாடு சியித்ததில் [2] நிகமத்தாரகத்து ஆண்டுவரை யுங் கடமையால்க் கொள்ளுநெல் * * ஞ[3] சேவது [4] மழகெருதுந் நெய்யுந்தளை (3)க் காணமுந்திருவல்லத்து மாதேவர்க்குந் திருக்கண்ணப்பன்னுங் கணபதிக்குந் நமக்காரத்தின்னுந் நித்தமும்[5] அத்தாழத்திருவமுர்து செய்யுமாறு கல்ப்பிச்ச(4)அரிமடை எ நாழியும் இரண் டிடத்துந் திருவமுற வாதில்க்கல் ஒரோதிங்கள் ஒரோ ததிலிசெல்லுமாறு கல்ப்பிச்ச தீபமாலைக்குங்கூட எழு (5)திக்கொடுததாரதிகாரர் இக்கா[ல][6] முதலா மாதேவர்க்கரி இருநாழி திருக்கண்ணப்பன்னரி இரு நாழி கணபதிக்கரிநாழி நமஸ்காரத்தின்னரி இரு(6)நாழி

---

1 நாகமக — (Tr. A. S., Vol. III, page 41).

2 சிவித்ததில — *ibid.*

3 **Read as** நெல உாமன *ibid.*

4 செயது — *ibid.*

5 நியதமும் — *ibid.*

6 **Read as** இககூறு—*ibid.*

இதின்னு மேல்க் காட்டுச்சேரியார்[1] கூட்டிக்கொடுத்த அச்சுவன்னும் நேலி[2] யாலொள்ளமுதலுங்கூட நாராணத்தாதர்கைக்கொண்டு செலுத்தித் தாம் விலைகொண்(7)ட அருவியூர்ப்புரை யிடத்தில்த் திருநந்தாவனமுஞ் சமைச்சு மூன்றிடத்தும் ஈரண்டு திருமாலயுஞ்சார்த்திச்சு சோறுமெடுத்து கொண்டுவருவிது நாராண(8)தாதர் இப்பரிசேநிகமத்து கடமை நெல்[3] *

* முமழுகெருது நெயிதளைக்காணமுமச்சுவந்[4] நேலியுந் நாராணதாதர் ஆண்டுவரை ஆறுதி(9)ங்கள் வாரமுங் கொண்டு குறியுங்கொடுத்து செலவுஞ் செலுத்தித்திருநந்தாவனமுந் திருமாலயுங் மொமாலயுஞ் செலுத்திவருவிது நாராண(10)தாதரி[5] * * * * ஸபையும் பிடார[6] திருவடியும் சோகிகள்க்குந் திருவுள்ளமாயவரைக்கொண்டு இங்வண்ணமே ஆசுந்தாரவல் செல்லு.[a]

No. 3/29. **OLD TAMIL.**

புரவரவில் ஆழ்வார் கோயில் தென்புறச்சுவரில்.

ஸ்வஸ்திஸ்ரீ கொல்லந்தோன்றி நாநூய்ந்து மாண்டைக் கெதிராமாண்டு இடபநாயிறு சு சென்ற சனிமகயிரத்து நாள் செய்ததான ஓலைக்கரணமாவது வேணாடு வாழ்ந்தருளுகின்ற ஸ்ரீவீர இரவிவர்ம்ம திருவடிக்கமைந்த அதிகாரர் புரவரிச் சதுர்வேதி மங்கலத்துப் புரவரவி (2) ராழ்வார்க்கு நித்தல் நிமந்தத்தினும் ஒரு திருநந்தாவிளக்கினும் திருவிடையாட்டமாக ஆசந்திர

1 சொரியார — Tr. A. S., Vol. III, p. 41

2 பொலி — *ibid.*

3 **Read as** உமிள — *ibid.*

4 பொலியும் — *ibid.*

5 **Read as** றமிற்பாகம் — *ibid.*

6 பிழாரர் — *ibid.*

(*a*) Observe the admixture of *Malayalam Granta* characters in the above *Vatteluttu* record. The style and *Santi* indicate the *natural variations* that led to the evolution of the Malayalam dialect.

தாரஞ் செல்வதாகவிட்ட (நிலம்) தாழைக்குடிச் சாரார் காலாலும் சாரவயற்குளஞ் செய்யாநேரியாலும் நீர் பாஞ்சு நெல்விளைவது உண்ணந்திட்டை (நிலம்காலே யிரண்டுமாமுந்திரிகை)யும் புதூரார் ஏறீலயில் (நிலம் மூன்றுமா)ம் (3) [ஆக] பத்துமாமுந்திரிகையும் இக் காலம்முதல் ஊரோடொத்த கடமைமாத்தால்* * * * இவ்வாழ்வார் கன்மிகள் தரவெழுதிக்குடுத்து புரவரி யாளுலே ஸ்ரீ பண்டார அறை வாசலிலே அளப்பித் துக்கொண்டு இச்சிலவு முட்டாமல செல்வதாகவும் இ(ந்நில)த்துக்கு நான்கெல்லையிலுந் திருவாழிக்கல்லு (4) இம்மார்க்கம் கற்பிச்சமைக்கு கல்லிலுஞ் செம்பி லும் எழுத்து வெட்டுவித்து இச்சிலவு முட்டாமல் செலவதாக கற்பிச்சமைக்கு இவை புல்லாலையையன் எழுத்து சிங்கன் ரங்கன் எழுத்து நாராயணன் சங்கரன் எழுத்துகோதைதேவன் எழுத்து திரு வெழுத்து உ (a)

No. 4/44. **OLD TAMIL.**

மேற்படி கோயில் மேற்புறச்சுவரில்.

ஸ்வஸ்தி * * * * * * ண்டு இ... பநாயிறு [சு] (2) சென்று சனிமகயிரத்தினுள் நாஞ்சி நாட்டுக் காரியஞ் செய்கின்றவர்களுந் தாழைக்குடியூருங்கூட இருந்து சேதுகுடுத்த பரிசாவது புரவரிச்சதுர ஸ்ரீ வெதி மங்கலத்து புர * * * * * * * * ரவிவர்மம திருவடி (3) க்கமைந்த அதிகாரர் திருச்சேநிடைக்கும் திருநந்தாவிளக்குக்குந் திருவுள்ளஞ் சேதருளிவந்த திருமுகப்படி தாழைக்குடி. கிடசேரி சாரார்காலாலும் சாரவயற்குளஞ் செய்யனேரியாலும் நீர்பா * * * * * * ஏறீலயில் (நிலம்) (4) (மூன்றுமாவு)ம் ஆக (நில)ம் பத்துமாமுந்திரிகையும் இந்நாள்முதல் கை

(a) The parts in semi-circular brackets express in words what is in symbols in the original.

கொண்டு ஊரோடொத்த கடமைகொண்டு இவ்
வாழ்வார்க்கு நித்த நிமந்தமும் திருநந்தாவிளக்கு
மாஹஶ்ரதாரஞ்செல்வ * * * * * தாகவும் சில
வரிசேதா (5) ரம் இந்நிலத்துக்கு இறுப்பதாகவும்
இப்படி இந்நிலங்கொண்டு முட்டாச்செலவு செல்வி
தாகத் திருவுள்ளஞ் சேதருளினபடியே கல்லிலும்
வெட்டிக்குடுத்து இந்நிலத்துக்கு நான்கெல்லை * * *
* * * க்குடுத்தோம் இக்கா (6) ரியஞ் செய்யின்ற
வாளைக்கூட இருத்தி இத்தாழைக்குடி ஊரோம் இவ்
வாழ்வோர் கன்மிகளுக்கு இப்படிக்கு அரையன் பசி
தாங்கி எழுத்து இவை கேரளன் அரங்கன் எழுத்து
இ * * * * * இவை விக்கிரமன் அரங்க (7) ன்
எழுத்து இவை வேளான் கேரளனான நாஞ்சிநாட்டு
மூவேந்த வேளான் எழுத்து இச்செய்கல் வோலை
எழுதினேன் கோயிற்கன்மிகளுந் தாழை ஊராரும்
பணிக்க எழுதினேன் பனை ஊருடையான் வேளா
* * * * * (8) ரன் எழுத்து கேரள லந்தோ
ஷைப் பல்லவரையன் எழுத்து கோவிந்தன் விக்கிரமன்
எழுத்து அனந்தன் சக்கிரபாணி எழுத்து[a]

No. 5/43. **OLD TAMIL.**

மேற்படி கோயில் தென்புறச்சுவரில்.

ஸ்வஸ்திஸ்ரீ கொல்லந் [தோன்] (2) றி நாசய
மாண்டு சிங்கநாயிறு எ சென்றநாள் செய்ததான
ஓலைக்கரணமாவிது (3) ஆற்றுவழிபோக்கர் இரண்டு
ப்ராஹ்மணபோஜனத்துக்கும் கற்பித்துவிட்ட (நிலம்)
கோட்டாற்[று] (4)லும் கைச்சிறையாலும் நீருண்டு
நெல்விளைவிது சேர * நீலகண்டன் பற்று நிலம் பன்
னிரண்டுமா [நாரா]யணன் குன்றப்பேரழன் எழுத்து
காளி குன்றப்பேரழன் எழுத்து திருவெழுத்து.

(a) The omissions due to the removal of one of the inscribed stones are marked thus * * * * *

No. $\frac{6}{10}$. VAṬṬELUTTU.

திருவாட்டாற்று ஆதிகேசவப்பெருமாள் கோயில் தென்புறச்சுவரில்.

ஸ்வஸ்திஶ்ரீ கொல்லம் நாலாமத[1] டாமாண்டை கர்க்கடகத்தில் வியாழந்நின்ற மீனஞாயிறு (ம)ச்சென்ற வியாழம் அனுழம் இந்நாளால் வேணாட்டு கோவிடை கூறுவாணருகின்ற[2] ஸ்ரீவீர உதைய மார்த்தாட்ட வர்ம திருவடி திருவாட்டாற்று பள்ளிகொண்டருளின்ற பெருமாள்க்கு நிபந்திப்படி முட்டாச்சிலவுரி * * * * ஆதிச்சனுதையம்மனுந் தம்பிமாற்கும்வுள்ள நிலம் செரியகறைக் கூட்டிய பெறை (நில)ம் * * வும் மாத்தறை (நில)ம் * கூட * * முறல் (நிலம்) * * மேலும் வுள்ள மூன்று சலாகையும் அழகச்சு நம் நின்னும் (2) நேலியால்[3] கோதைநல்லூர் கீழ்ச்சேரி, திருக்கோயில்க்கல் கொண்டு வந்து * * * * * * பூவழி. (b)

No. $\frac{7}{86}$. OLD MALAYALAM.

திருவனந்தபுரம் கோசால கிருஷ்ணன்கோயில் வடபுறச்சுவரில்,

സ്വസ്തിശ്രീഃ സ്യാനന്ദൂരൈകഗോഷ്ഠല (2) യ കമലദ്വശൈഗോദ മാത്താണ്ഡശോഭം (3) നായിശചത്രവംഹി ധനക്ഷിചകൃതനൈവേദ്യ (4) മൃത്തുംശജീവെ ശ്രീമാനാദിത്യ രാമസ്സഹിരജതകൃതം (5) ഡിണ്ഡിമ മന്ദരാങ്കം ഡിംഡീരാവണ്ഡഷണ്ഡദ്യുതിസ്തു (6) മേദിശന്മാന്യ അുത്മം ക്ഷമായാഃ. (b)

---

1 நளகுயஅ—in Tr. A. S. Vol. 1 p. 296.
2 இளங்குடைவாணணருளுகின்ற — Tr. A. S. Vol. 1.
3 வேணாடு இளங்கூறுவாணருளின — Tr. A. S. IV. 26.
பொலியால — Tr. A. S. Vol. 1.

(a) கின்ற is now unknown to Malayalam. It is curious to note how in the above Vaṭṭeḻuttu record it is seeking to slip out of the language. அருள்கின்ற is first spelt அருகின்ற and then அருளின்ற.

(b) There are not many letters in old Malayalam which have not since altered their form. ഭ for instance is written ஜ as in Tamil *Granta*.

No. $\frac{8A}{83}$. **VATTELUTTU.**

வீரளம் அஸ்திவார வடக்கிழக்குச் சுவரில்.

ஸ்வஸ்திஸ்ரீ கொல்லம் நாசுமே மாண்டு கன்னியில் வியாழநின்ற இடபஞாயிறு உ. சென்ற நாள் கீழ்ப்.

No. $\frac{8B}{83}$. Do.

மேற்படி நாலம்பலத்துக்கு முன்னுள்ள பலிபீடத்தின் மேற்குப்புறம்,

ஸ்ரீ தேவதரங் கேரளவர்ம்ம திருவடிபிரதிட்ட பண்ணியது.

No. $\frac{9}{60}$. **VATTELUTTU.**

வெள்ளாணிக்குணங்கரை ஆழ்வார்கோயில் அஸ்திவாரத்
தென்புறச்சுவரில்

ஸ்வஸ்திஸ்ரீ கர்க்கடத்தில் வியாழநின்றயாண்டு கொல்லம் நாளமக மாண்டை மேடஞாயிறு உசம் சென்ற நாள்ச் செய்த காரியமாவிது வேணுடு வாழ்ந் தருளுகின்ற ஸ்ரீ வீரராமவர்ம்ம திருவடிக்கமைஞ்ச அதிகாரருடைய செங்கோட்டாறு (2) சேரிக்கல் திருக்குண கரைவானமாதவ[1] நாராயண விண்ணகர் ஆழ்வான்னு பெலவுந்திருநந்தா விளக்கின்னும் எழுதி நீரோடுமட்டிக்கொடுத்தார். அதிகாரர் இக்காலம் முத லாய் இச்சேரிக்கல் வேணுட்டறுநூற்றுவரும் பணி (3) செய்யின்றவர்களுங் காரியஞ் செய்யின்றவர்களும் மனுழச்சமாய்த் திருக்குணகரைச் செலவுசெலுத்து மவன் னேழியூர்ப்[2] பட்டாரகர்க்கு செலவின்னு முன் னம் அதிகாரர் கல்பிச்சுவிட்டு கொடுத்த நிலங்நீக்கி

---

1 ஆயின மாதவ—Tr. A. S. III P. 36.

2 பொழியூரப—ibid.

வுள்ளதெப்பேர்ப் (4) பட்டதும்கூட அதிகரிச்சு
கொண்டு நியதம்மடையால் நாழிச்சேவதரி[1] திரு
வமிர்துஞ் செய்யிச்சு ஓரோதிருநந்தா விளக்குஞ்
செலுத்திவருவிது நியதம் அமிர்துசெய்யும் அரிமடை
நாழிக்கும் புறைக்கூலி நீக்கிஆ(5)ண்டுவரவேண்
டுந்நெல்பத்(து)[2] க்காலால் இருபத்துநால்க்கலமுந் திரு
நந்தாவிளக்கு ஒன்றினுவேண்டுந் நெய்யெண்ணையுந்
திரிநூலும் முட்டாதே செலுத்திவருவிது செங்கோட்
டாற்று மேலுங்கீழுமொள்ள நிலத்தில் ஊழுப் பூமி
யும் காராண்மை நில (6)த்தில்க்கொள்ளும் மேலதுங்[3]
கொடுங்[4] கரைப்புரயிடமும் ஆறும்பிக்கு எப்பேர்ப்
பட்டதுங்கூட அதிகரிச்சு கொண்டுசெலவும் முட்
டாதே செலுத்துவிது. இது ஒரு துடைமுட்டுகில்
முட்டிரட்டி இரண்டுதுடைமுட்டுகில் முரட்டிரட்டி
யுந் தெண்ட (7) மும்மூன்று துடைமுட்டுகில் அறு
நூற்றுவரும் பணிசெய்யின்றவர்களும் பதினெட்டு
ராஜ்யத்தில் வளஞ்சியரும் ஆராழ்ச்சபண்ணி ஆசரு
தாரவல் முட்டாதே செலுத்துவிது இச்சேரிக்கல்
நாலெல்ல அகப்பட்த் தோரணமுந்நாட்டித் திருவிடை
யாட்டமாக செல்லுமாறு (8) கல்ப்பிச்செடுத்தறியுந்
தாக்கு[5] கொக்காப்பறம்பில்க் கணடங்கண்டனும்
அறியும் தானமண்கோட்டத்துகேரள மீசுவரனும்[6]
அறியும் ஆதி திருவிக்கிரமன்பாங்கனும்[7] அறியும் பட்
டாழிக் கோவிந்நங் குமரனும் அறியும் இப்படிக்கு
மே[8] கைதவாயக்கண்டன் (9) உதயன்னன் எழுத்து.

---

1 செயதரி – Tr : A. S. Vol. III

2 'There is a symbol which may be taken for மரக்கால' – ibid.

3 மேலபாதியுங் – ibid.

4 காடுங் – ibid.

5 தாழ்கி – ibid.

6 கேரளஞ்சுவரனும் – ibid

7 புனலூரி விக்கிரமனபாங்கவனும் – ibid.

8 இபபடிக்கிவை – ibid.

No. 10/61 **Vatteluttu.**

திருவனந்தபுரம் ஸ்ரீபத்மநாபசுவாமி கோயில் இரண்டாம்பிரகார 'இடைநாழி'(a)யின் தென்புறச் சிறுசுவரில்.

ஸ்வஸ்திஸ்ரீ கற்கடகத்தில் வியாழநின்றயாண்டு கொல்லம் நூற்அமஷ * * * * * (2) ளால திருவானந்தபுரத்து ஸஊயுஞ்சமஞ்சிதனும் மித்திரானந்தபுரத்து தெக் * * * * * * (3) ன்னதியில் கூடியிருந்தருளி(1) யெடத்து திருவெணாட்டடிகள் ஸ்ரீவீர இராமங் * * * * (4) ங்கப்பல்லவரையன் திருவானந்தபுரத்து பெருமானுக்குத் திருவமிர்தினுந்த * * * * (5) நாளுழியிலும் ஒருஸ்ராஹணர் அமிர்து செய்த(b) தினு வேண்டும் வெஞ்சனம் * * * * * (6) தறைமேல் நிச்சல் நடைபாட்டமாளுமவர் கைவழி (2) பெருமாள் பறயால் அளவுகொ * * * * (7) திங்கப்பல்லவரயன்குள்ள (3) செய்யமண்ணுங் களத்தூரும் சிறைமறமும் செழுஞ் (4) * * * * * (8) கரையும் கரைபுரையிடத்தில் மேலும் ஆண்டு வரையும் பங்குனி உத்திரத்தி * * * * (9) நிச்சல் நடயோடுகூடகூழமிட்டு அகத்து பந்திரடிக்கு ஒருநேர் (5) அமிர்து * * * * * (10) வர ஒரோ (6) திருமால கெட்டிச்சார்த்தி வருவது இங்நெல் ஒரு துடைமுட்டு * * * * * * (11) ட அடுத்து

(a) இடைநாழி is Malayalam for a low passage between two rooms.

(b) செயததினு looks like a mistake for செய்வதினு.

1 இருந்தருளி – (Tr. A. S. Vol. IV. page 67 Ed).

2 பாட்டமாளுமவாள் வாழி reading in (Tr. A. S. Vol. IV, 67 Ed).

3 பலலவரயனடுனுள்ள – reading in (Tr. A. S. Vol.IV, page 67 Ed.)

4 சிறைபுறமுஞ் ஆழுஞ்சை reading in – (Tr. A. S. Vol. IV, page 67 Ed.)

5 ஒருபெரு reading in – (Tr. A. S. Vol. IV, page 47).

6 பெர் ஒ ரொ reading in – (Tr. A. S. Vol IV).

முட்டுகில் ௩. ஸம்மு (1) தடுத்துச்ச நெல்லும் அளவு கொள்விக்கு தந்த * * * * * (12) ம் ருகில் ஸ்ரீபாதமூலம் சென்று தீர்த்து கொடுப்பித்து இவை கைதவனாகத்து * * * * * (13) ண்ற (a) யாண்டு கொல்லம் ௩அ௨ (2) யாமாண்டு விரிச்சிக ஞாயிறு.

No. 11/20 VETTELUTTU.

கடினங்குளத்து மஹாதேவர்கோயில் வடமேற்கு அஸ்திவாரச்சுவரில்

ஸ்வஸ்திஸ்ரீ கும்பவியாழத்தில் கொல்லம் ௩அ௨க்கு நாமாண்டை எதிராமாண்டை மீன ஞாயிறு ம (2) சென்ற வியாழமாண்டபுயம் தேச பிய மேடமும் அன்று இழப்பேரூர் ஸ்ரீ வீர இராமங் கேரளவர் (3) மதிருவடிகொஞ்செழுந்தருள ஸ்ரீ வீர இராமனுமையம்மை வி[ள்ளவர்] (3) திருவடி பிரதிட்டைப (4) ண்ணிச்சருளித்து.

No. 12/91 Do.

பத்மநாபபுரத்துக்கு அடுத்த மணலிக்கரை ஆழ்வார் கோயில் முன்பு நட்டிருக்கும் கல்லில் உள்ள சிலாலிகிதம்.

1. ஸ்வஸ்திஸ்ரீ வ்ருஸ்சிகத்தில்(2) வியாழநின்றயாண்டு (3) கொல்லம் நானூற்று இரு (4) (4) பதாமாண்டைக்

(a) ண்ற may be taken as ண்ற also in which case the interpretation I have given in the lecture will not hold good. But it is altogether improbable that the date with which the document begins is repeated in the end for no special reason. I prefer, therefore, to take it as standing for அற or அரை.

1 ஸஸம்மு – and adds the foot note. "The first letter is written below the line and looks like the sign for 'pady' or ḷa. Perhaps reading intended is நெல் ஸஸம்மும்"—(Tr. A. S. ibid).

2 Words after this are omitted in – (Tr. A. S.)

3 "யான பின்னையார்" is the reading in – (Tr.A.S. Vol. IV, page 70)

4 இரு – (Tr. A. S., Vol. III, page 61.)

கெதிராமா (5) ண்டு மேடஞாயிறு மிள [1] சென் (6) ற நாள் வேணாடுவாணரருளி (7) ன்ற ஸ்ரீ வீர இரவி கேரள (8) வர்ம்மதிருவடிக்கமை (9) ந்த அதிகாரி களும் கோதை ந (10) ல்லூர் ஸபையாரும் ஊர் (11) ராரும் (மேற்படி) ஊர்க்கடமைத்தடின் [2] (12) ற மரு தகச் சேரிக்கண்டந்தி (13) ருவிக்கிரமனும்கூடி (14) ப்பாறஞ்ஞு ஸபை நடயி [3] (15) ல் இறைவரிநிலம் * * (16) த்தின் மேலும் அரக்கல் (17) கலச்செ ஈவு நெல் * * * (18) உமிசம் சாரல்கடமைக்கு ஈ (19) வுக லச்ச * * * உமிசமா (20) க ஆண்டுவரை கட மைக்கு க (21) லச்செ ஈவு நெல் * * * * * (22) வும் ஊராட்டு இறை நிலம் (22) * * * * த்தின் மேலும் அர,

II. (1) க் கல்கடமைக்கு கலச்செ ஈவு (2) நெல் * * * உமிசம் சாரல்க்கு (3) கலச்செ ஈவு நெல் * * * * * * (4) * * * உமிசமாக ஆண்டு வரை கடமை (5) க்கு கலச்செ ஈவுநெல் * * * (6) * * * * * * மாக இறுக்கு (7) மாறும் கடமை அளந் நா (8) ல்வரிப்புள்ளி பாஞ்ஞுத (9) ருமாறும் கரண மெழுதின்ற (10) வர்கைய்யில்த் [4] திரதரவு (11) றியுமாறுங்கல்ப்பிச்சேம் [5] க(12)டமைக்குநெல்லளந்நா (13)ல வரியில்ப்புள்ளி பாஞ்ஞு [6] (14)துவாரிகையில் [7] தரவு கொள்க ஒழிவு (15)து கடமைசென்று செல்லாத் ததின்னு (16) ஆண்டுவரையும் ஸபை யாரையும்

1 உமிஎ ibid.
2 தண்டின ibid.
3 யடவி ibid.
4 கையயால் ibid.
5 கலப்பிச்சோம் ibid.
6 வாஞ்ஞு ibid.
7 கையால ibid.

(17) ஊராரையும் வளைச்சு அஞ்சாலி (18) எழுதிப் பிடிப்பிச்சு கடமை (19) யுங்கொண்டு வருவது கரி வொள் (20) ளகாலத்து ஸஒஷையாருயும் ஊரா (21) ரும் பற்றுகண்டு அஞ்சொன்று (22) ஞல் வண்டாக் கின்ற முதலுங்கூட் (23) டிவிளவொள்ள நிலத்தின் மேல் (24) கடமைகொடுப்பிது கரிஞ்ஞுகட (25) மை யற்றி[1] என்று தோன்றுகில் த (26) டையாருமூராரும் துவாமியோடு (27) சொன்னு [ல்] துவாரி பற்று கண்டு அ (28) ஞ்சொன்று கொள்விது இம்முதலி (29) ல் பட்டவிருந்தி ஓமை ச் செலவின் (30) னுள்ள ‥ முமம் அஞ்சொன்றில (31) கழிவிது நடுவில்[2] மொழிஞ்ஞு த (32) டையார்க்கும் ஊரார்க்கும்,

III. ம்க்கும் (2) சனத்தின் (3) னு ஒத்தோ[3] (4) ரு வழிவே[4] (5) ண்டகில்[5] (6) அம்முதல் (7) கு இறநி (8) லத்தின் (9) மேல்வரி (10) யு மொழுதி (11) க்கொடுத்து (12) அம்முதல் (13) க்குபலி (14) செயும் ப (15) ட்டாரியுமொ (16) ழிஞ்ஞு தண் (17) டிக்கொண்டு (18) வரியும் (19) புள்ளியா (20) ஞ்ஞு ஞேவி[6] (21) து இரமா (22) ரக்காரன்றி (23) யே செய்யோா (24) நளராகிலெ (25) ‥ ‥ [7] (26) ‥ ‥ (8) (16) (27) (17) (9) ‥ ‥ த

IV. ண்டமும (2) பொகபி (3) மனேயுங் இ (4) ச்செய்ததே (5) காரியமா (6) விதாகவும் (7) ஆசருயார் (8) வல்கல (9) ரபிச்சு (10) எழுதிய துரவு (11) திருமுகத் (12) திலப்பட் (13) டமார்க்க (14) மே

---

1 பறு ibid.
2 This is deciphered as a symbol and நில. Tr. A. S., Vol. III.
3 ாதத்தா (ibid)
4 அழிவொ. (ibid)
5 ண்டாகில.
6 ஞ் ஞுபொவி.
7 Read as அயமதநி.
8 ருகழுஞ் (மு).
9 ஞுபொமா.

எழுதிய (15) மைக்கு இ (16) து கல்வெட் (17) டாகும்.[a]

No. 13/48. **VATTELUTTU.**

வர்க்கலையில் ஸ்ரீகோயில் தென்புறச்சுவரில்

ஸ்வஸ்திஸ்ரீ பேடத்தில் புகுவியாழந்நின்றயாண்டு கொல்லம் சாஉடள மாண்டை இடவஞாயிறு இரு பத்து ஒன்று சென்ற புதஞழ்ச்சையும்பூர்வபக்ஷத்தில் பஞசமியும் (2) அன்றே கர்க்கடகம் இராசிகொண்டு வர்க்கலை உதைய மாத்தாண்டபுரத்து வடசேரிகர[1] சிரிகோயில் அதிட்டானம் துடங்கி உத்தரத்தோள மு[ம்] கொ்ப்ப (3)கிரிகமும் தளக்கல்லும் கூடக்கருங் கல்பணியும் செயிச்சு சிரிமானம் செம்பும்மேயிச்சு சிரி முகமண்டபமும் புதுக்கிப்பணியும் செயிச்சு திருக்க (4) லையும் ஆடிச்சருளிய வேணுடுவாழ்ந்தரு[ள்] சிரிவீர பத்தஞபம்மார்த்தாண்டவர்மம திருவடிக் கமைஞ்ச அதிகாரர்.

No. 14/69. **OLD TAMIL.**

பத்மநாபபுரத்துக்கு அடுத்த கேரளபுரம் கோயில் தென்புற அஸ்திவாரச்சுவரில்.

கொல்லம் சாகூடிக மாண்டை யாண்டு ச-வது கும்பஞாயிறு உம[2] சென்றநாள் செய்த காரியமாவது வேணுடு வாழ்ந்தருளுகின்ற ஸ்ரீவீர உதையமார்த்

(a) I to IV mark the four sides of the tablet. It will be seen how corrupt the language of the document is. Does it show that it was drafted by a member of the Kódaiallûr Sabha, and not by the hereditary clerk of the crown as usual? It freely mixes up Tamil and Malayalam, as is still done by the illiterate classes in Nánjinâd.

1 "The inscription being worn away Vadaserikara had been read for Bhattarakar"—Tr. A. S. IV p. 157.

2 ஷ. Tr : A : S. Vol. IV, p. 91. (Ed).

தாண்டவர்ம்ம திருவடியார் வீரபாண்டிய தேவர்க்கு அமைந்த அதிகாரர்க்குவுள்ள தென்னாட்டில் செங்கழு நீர் நாடு (2) முதல்நாட்டில் பால்க்கோட்டுதேசம் முத்(1) தலைக்குறிச்சி ஸ்ரீவீரகேரள ஈச்சுவரத்துமாதேவர்க்கு செலவின்னும் திருநந்தா விளக்கின்னும் எழுதிவிட்டுக் கொடுத்தார் அமைந்த அதிகாரர் இம்மார்க்கமே இத் தேசத்து கழியக்கம் கொள்ளும் ஒட்டிரகடமையும்(2) உவ்வியும் வேய்நெல்லும் அழகெ (3) ருதும் தறிதலை பணைம்பாட்டமும் கரைப்பற்றும் அழிவு பிழையும் கோமுறைபாடும்(3) கூடவிட்டுக்கொடுத்தார் அமைந்த அதிகாரர் இவ்வெண்ணமே இத்தேசத்து திருவிதான்க் கோட்டு மாதேவர்க்கும் பாக்கோட்டு தேவர்க்கும் பகவதிக்கும் கழியக்கம்(4) ஒள்ளது நீங்கலாக ஒள்ள ஒட்டிறகடமையும் உவ்வியும் வேய் (4) நெல்லும் அழ கெருதும் தறிதலைபணைம்பாட்டமும் கரைப்பற்றும் அழிவுபிழையும் கோன்முறைபாடும்க்(5)கூட ஆசந்திர தாரவல் வீரகேரள ஈச்சுவரத்தும்மாதேவர்க்கு செல விலும் திருநந்தாவிளக்கிலும் எழுதிவிட்டு கொடுத் தெடத்து அறியும் தாழக்கி(6)புலவரமண் சாத்தன் மணியனும் அறியும் பெணா (5) ஙாட்டு(7) நாராணன் குடிசனும்(8) அறியுப் பட்டாழிகலைடன் இரவிவர்ம் மன் எழுத்து புனலூரி * * * திரிவிக்கிரமன் (9) எழுத்து இவகள்ளறிய யோலை கையெழுதிய கைய் தைவா இராமன் கேரளன் எழுத்து.

---

1 பாலக்கோட்டு தேசம் – Tr. A. S. Vol. IV.

2 ஒட்டிறகடமை – ibid.

3 கொள்முறைபாடும் – ibid.

4 கிழயக்கம – ibid.

5 கொள்முறைபாடும் – ibid.

6 தாழ்க்கி – ibid.

7 மெக்(5)கொட்டு – ibid.

8 கூமரனும் – ibid.

9 தாமோதரவிக்கிரமன் – ibid.

APPENDIX B

SOME EARLY SOVEREIGNS OF TRAVANCORE

A Review by Dr. Robert Harvey

To one who has had experience of India and Indian Literature, this little book comes like the crisp cool invigorating breezes of a hill station, after a prolonged sojourn among the balmy but enervating airs of the plains. The favourite faculty of the native of India is the imagination, and one of his greatest delights is to be allowed to roam fancy free in a world the facts of which are his own creation. As might be expected, he too often feels irked and fretted, when for any reason he is required to give an uncoloured statement of facts, not as his glowing imagination would picture them, but as they actually present themselves in the sober and dry light of nature or history. He would very heartily share the feeling of the man who, when it was pointed out to him that his description did not square with the facts, is reported to have said "So much the worse for the facts." The study of history has therefore not flourished in India, and that country has, so far as we are aware, nothing in its literature at all like the great histories in which the western nations have sought to preserve a permanent and reasoned record of their development or of their "Decline and Fall." It will therefore be easily understood with what pleasure we perused the little work before us, and found the author, for the purposes of history, weighing evidence in the most severely critical manner, acknowledging ignorance wherever he did not really know, suspending judgment wherever he could not gather sufficient data to enable him to form it, and exercising his imagination only within strict scientific limits and then with good effect. This is the kind of guide that one feels confidence in following where one's own knowledge fails, and Mr. Sundaram Pillai may feel assured that if he continues his historical researches in the same admirable spirit he has displayed in this little book before us, he will have done

much to secure the acceptance by others of any conclusions he may hereafter find himself able to reach. Nor must we, in giving Mr. Sundaram Pillai the praise that is his due for the judicial spirit he displays in his investigations, omit to give him credit for another quality not often expected or found in antiquarians. It usually requires one to have a very genuine interest in the subject to follow them in their investigations among musty records or half obliterated inscriptions, but Mr. Sundaram Pillai has the power of lighting up the treatment of a naturally very dry subject with frequent flashes of a genial humour, which makes us willing to follow him when otherwise we might feel strongly inclined to shut the book and say, " Enough ! " Speaking for example of an inscription on the walls of a ruinous temple he had to decipher, he says: " Care, however, should be taken that the examination is not long postponed, lest the temple be gone by the time the expedition is undertaken, and equal care should be taken also, in the course of the examination, not to disturb the serpents inside, lest the examiner be gone before his mission is fulfilled! " And again, speaking in his introduction of the generally dilapidated condition of the materials he has to deal with, he says: " Our sources of historical information, both ethnical and epigraphical, seem to be all equally moribund muttering, as it were with their dying gasp, ' observe now, or never. ' How important, how helpful these dying declarations of the past are often found to be, only those who have dealt with them can know, and if I here venture to catch and interpret some of the still voices of antiquity in our midst, with a view mainly to awaken general interest in our history, I have no other justification to offer, no other apology to make, than that they might ere long cease to be heard at all". Did space permit, we could add other quotations to show the brightness and sparkle of the author's style, but we have given enough to show that Mr. Sundaram Pillai is something more than a mere Dr. Dry-as-Dust. From the nature of the subject he deals, it can appeal to the interest of the

comparatively few beyond the limit of Travancore itself; but we sincerely trust that the qualities he has displayed in this confined field may attract attention, and lead perhaps to wider scope being found for the exercise of so admirable a judicial spirit, accompanied by a modesty, candour and literary style equally admirable, for in a country like India there ought to be no difficulty in finding abundant opportunity for utilising such rare gifts as Mr. Sundaram Pillai has given such gratifying evidence of in the little book before us.

We may now just indicate what Mr. Sundaram Pillai, in his concluding sentences, considers, with good reason, he has accomplished by his labours among the too often half-effaced inscriptions which he calls the "The dying declarations of the past." He says "You have for the first time revealed to you the names and dates of nine of the old and revered sovereigns of Venad (Travancore). That these names and dates by themselves, will not constitute the history of the two centuries we took up for our study, needs no saying. But that they will stand in good stead when the history of the epoch comes to be written is my humble hope and trust." As an aid to enable us to weigh his interpretations of the inscriptions and the inferences he had drawn from them, he gives in an appendix, the inscriptions themselves trans-literated into modern Tamil and Malayalam, though as he very truly remarks, "For the purpose of palæography nothing short of photo-lithographs can be of much real value."

The book is appropriately dedicated to the present Maharaja of Travancore whose Government has kindly aided Mr. Sundaram Pillai in his investigations, not, however, to such an extent as to make it unnecessary for him to draw upon his own private resources.

—*The Indian Magazine and Review* (*London*) *Jan. 1895.*

APPENDIX C

RAI BAHADUR P. SUNDARAM PILLAI

M.A., F.R.H.S., M.R.A.S., F.M.U.

(*Professor of Philosophy, The Maharaja's College, Trivandram, Travancore*)

A Life Sketch

BY

Dr. Robert Harvey*

Mr. Sundaram Pillai was one of my earliest students, and this relationship, uninterruptedly pleasant, gradually developed into one of very sincere friendship—a friendship, that, whilst I was in India, made his not infrequent visits always welcome, and since my return to Scotland, made his letters equally so.

About his career before he joined the Maharajah's College, I know very little. His native town was Alleppey, and it was, I believe, at the Anglo-Vernacular School there that he received his earlier education. His father a small but respectable shop-keeper, seems to have brought up Sundaram, who was his only child, with much care and solicitude and when my friend had occasion to refer to his parents he invariably spoke of them with gratitude and respect. To his father, I believe, he was indebted for that thorough grounding in his own language and literature (the Tamil) which afterwards developed into that loving study, which was producing such abundant fruit when death cut short his labours. To his mother, also, he was evidently sincerely attached. Only in his last letter I received from him, he mentioned that he had just finished the ceremonies connected with the anniversary of her death—an occasion which, he said, he always made a gala day in the family in

---

* This article appeared in the *Indian Magazine and Review* (London) in May 1897.

the way of marking his gratitude to her who bore him. The western education that their son received, made it impossible for him to look at many things in the same light as his parents did, but he never allowed this circumstance to diminish aught of the respect which he considered due to them, and I have heard him more than once mention various arrangements he fell in with only from a desire not to hurt their feelings.

At this distance of time, I cannot now recall the occasion on which my attention was first drawn to young Sundaram; but as far as my recollection carries me, the most marked features of his character have ever been a retiring modesty in his relations with his fellows, and deep reverence when brought face to face with the final problem of being. I have now known him for upwards of twenty-eight years, and I think I may safely say that seldom did conversation or letter end without one or other, or both these characteristics being brought out.

His college career was carried through not only without a failure, but with distinguished success. Having taken his B.A. degree with distinction, he proceeded without delay to continue his studies for M.A. degree in Philosophy. He succeeded in doing this in such a way as to impress his examiner with the thoughtful cast of his mind. Shortly afterwards, he was appointed to assist in the teaching of Philosophy and History in his own College. He left this to take up the post of headmaster of the Tinnevelly High School, which he soon raised to the status of a Second Grade College. Whilst here, he came under the influence of a remarkable man—Sri Sundara Swamiyar of Kodaganallur. In a letter which I received from him about this time, he speaks in terms of the highest enthusiasm of this gentleman, and I suspect that my friend remained more or less under the influence of his mystical and more or less pantheistic teaching till his death. In 1879 when I was at home on furlough, Mr. Sundaram Pillai was appointed to the full charge of the Philosophy classes in his old college.

I know that he taught the subject with the greatest ability and acceptance, developing a power of happy illustration of knotty points, and a command of crisp English that greatly commended itself to his students, who, I have no doubt, were much indebted to these characteristics of my friend's teaching for University examinations. On my return to Trivandram, his connection with the College was unfortunately interrupted, and for a time he held an appointment in the Revenue Department. I do not think, however, that he felt thoroughly at home in the kind of work he had to do here. His thoughtful and contemplative cast of mind, as well as his delicate sense of right, rebelled—the first against perpetual dealing with columns of prosaic figures, the second against the shadier side of human character with which he was brought in contact; and it was therefore in several respects a happy circumstance for him when my appointment to the Principalship of the College through the retirement of Mr. Ross, made it necessary to entrust the teaching of philosophy to one, who would have more leisure and energy than I could command. Almost as a matter of course the choice of the Maharajah's Government fell upon Mr. Sundaram Pillai; and he once more gladly resumed his connection with the College—a connection broken all too soon by his death.

And yet he did not return to this more congenial sphere without some sacrifice in leaving the department in which he had been working for five or six years. He had, for one thing, left a department which might lead by many ways to the highest offices of Government. He had been discharging the duties of an office, which among his fellow countrymen, brought the holder of it much more honor and consideration than any office in the department to which he now came. It was, I believe, in spite of considerable opposition on the part of friends and relatives that he deliberately laid aside these prospects, and sacrificed this honor and consideration in returning to his old love. His decision was, I am convinced, a happy one ultimately for himself,

and a most fortunate one for his college and for the cause of vernacular literature and historical research. It was not long before all concerned found reason to congratulate themselves upon his appointment. I have the most satisfactory reasons for believing that, in his class-room. he won the respect and affection of his students; and, judged even by the somewhat mechanical standard of University results, his work has proved eminently successful. In doing this work, I believe his efforts were always earnestly directed to develop in the young men who came under his influence a spirit of reverence and enlightened faith. I know that this was not always easy for him to do, for he had his time of stress and struggle, but I know that he always seriously *strove* to do it. I have, for instance, before me a letter of his in which he says: Many thanks for the issues of the *Scotsman* containing a summary of Professor Fraser's Gifford lectures. These latter I read to my senior class as they came in and they afforded us some hours of pleasant reading and profitable discussion; and more than all that, a healthy counteraction, in the case of young men, against the prevailing tone of the writers whom they have especially to study." But, as may be inferred from what has been said, his interest was not confined to his own proper subject. In at least two other directions he developed much and valuable activity: first in the study of his native language and literature; and second, in the study of the antiquities of his country especially, as these bore on its ancient writers or ancient history. In all these departments he did valuable work which was highly appreciated by the best authorities on the different subjects. Dr. Kühn, of Munich, for instance, (to whom his lectures on the Age of Tirugnana Sambandha had been submitted) writes as follows: "I see that Mr. Sundaram Pillai evidently treats his subject not only with full knowledge of the matter, but also with critical keenness and caution, and so arrives at very valuable results." Sir M. E. Grant Duff, again, was so favourably impressed with the value of his investigations in the field of

historical research, that, at his instance, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. Similar appreciation was shown by his election to the membership of the Asiatic Society. His mind was eminently well-balanced and sober; and especially in the remarkable lectures he delivered on the Early Sovereigns of Travancore, he gave abundant evidence of his power to weigh and sift evidence. He succeeded in throwing much light on the obscure early history of his native state, and from his letters I see that there was promise of much more. It is very pathetic to read these, and note his frequent lamentations on the little his health had permitted him to do, as compared with what remained to be done. He writes, in October 1895: "I trust in God's mercy to give me at least my former health for a year or two, so that I might write something at least on the materials I have taken the trouble to gather. But let it be as He wills it". I believe the Maharajah valued highly these attempts of my friend to throw light on the history of the beautiful country he rules, and showed his appreciation of his efforts, by instituting an archæological department, for the purpose of more effectively carrying on the investigations, which Mr. Sundaram Pillai had prosecuted at his own expense. Dr. Hultzsch, Government Archæologist in Madras and Dr. Burgess, who formerly held a similar post in Bombay, also expressed themselves in terms of warm praise of these historical researches and of the spirit in which they were conducted. It is interesting to note how there seemed to be that in his cast of mind which appealed equally to the keen and practical Western intellect, and, at the same time, commended him to the mystical and contemplative temperament of his own countrymen. Dr. Pope of Oxford, for instance, writes to me, in answer to a letter notifying his death: "He was very kind and sympathetic with regard to various little things I have done in Tamil, and I shall feel his loss very much. To the small circle of real Tamil students, the loss seems simply irreparable;" while in a letter I received from

my friend himself some time ago, he tells me with evident pleasure how he had everywhere been received by his native friends. "At Madura," he adds, "the Head of the Saiva Monastry"—orthodox, of course, and non-English educated—"was so far pleased with my attempt to fix the age of the Tamil saint (Sambandha), that he entertained us the whole week we stayed there, and presented me with a costly shawl in the native style of honouring Pundits. This is especially welcome, coming from a religious, venerable and aged ecclesiastic." The leaders of Western Philosophy who probably influenced him most were Dr. Fraser and Dr. Martineau. His personal affinities were with them on most of the deeper problems of philosophy, while, no doubt, all his thoughts on these subjects were more or less tinged with the pantheistic mysticism of the East. Latterly he corresponded with the venerable expositor of Berkeley and his letter to me contained frequent and touching evidence of the reverence and admiration he entertained for Dr. Fraser, who thought very highly of his character and ability. Dr. Fraser writes of him as follows: "He seems to have been a most interesting and admirable person, whose goodness and candour were strikingly revealed in letters with which he favoured me, and in his published writings which I have read, I truly sympathise with you and his other friends, and recognise the loss to religious thought and scientific inquiry in India. I will cherish his memory."

Mr. Sundaram Pillai could hardly have been much more than forty-five years[1] old when he died, and, in spite of the persistent ill-health that latterly crippled his powers, he had already given abundant proof of unusual ability in all that he touched. He had been made a fellow of his university, and for many years had been an examiner in Tamil for its degrees. Latterly also, he had been appointed to examine in philosophy both for B.A. and M.A. Degrees. He had, as we have seen, attracted the attention and gained the

1 He was only forty-two when he died.—Ed.

esteem of such men as Dr. Kühn, Dr. Kielhorn, and Dr. Pope. I have, by the bye, omitted to mention that my friend cultivated original composition in Tamil to good purpose. He wrote a play, "Manonmaniyam" after the Shakesperean model, which was favourably noticed in the pages of this magazine, and has since been adopted as a text book by the Madras University. Dr. Pope, I believe, spoke of its style as *charming*, and only the many calls of other work have prevented him from carrying out his purpose to write a critical review of it. I may mention, also, that in the months before his death my friend had been engaged in gathering materials for a review of the questions dealt with by Dr. Fraser in his Gifford lectures ; and, once and again, in his letters he expresses keen regret that the state of his health alone prevented him from proceeding further with a subject that had so much fascination for him. Only a few months before his death, the British Government was led to mark its high appreciation of his labours by bestowing upon him the title of Rai Bahadur. And now his life, so full of further promise, has been suddenly and prematurely cut short, but I feel sure that he would desire all who very naturally feel perplexed by the non-fulfilment of such rich promise, to strive to cultivate the spirit of devout resignation to higher wisdom, which he himself showed in similar circumstances. His life, comparatively short as it has been, ought to be a valued possession and an inspiration to the young men of Travancore and of India. He will certainly not have lived in vain, if his life helps to spread among his fellow countrymen, something of the same personal modesty coupled with high aims, something of the same reverence accompanied with keen critical power, something of the same readiness to give their due weight to the deep and solemn intuitions of the heart coupled with an admirable power of weighing evidence and discriminating truth from falsehood in the ordinary fields of science. I may, perhaps, fitly conclude this imperfect notice of my friend, by giving an illustration of what most people would admit to be his clear-headed common sense.